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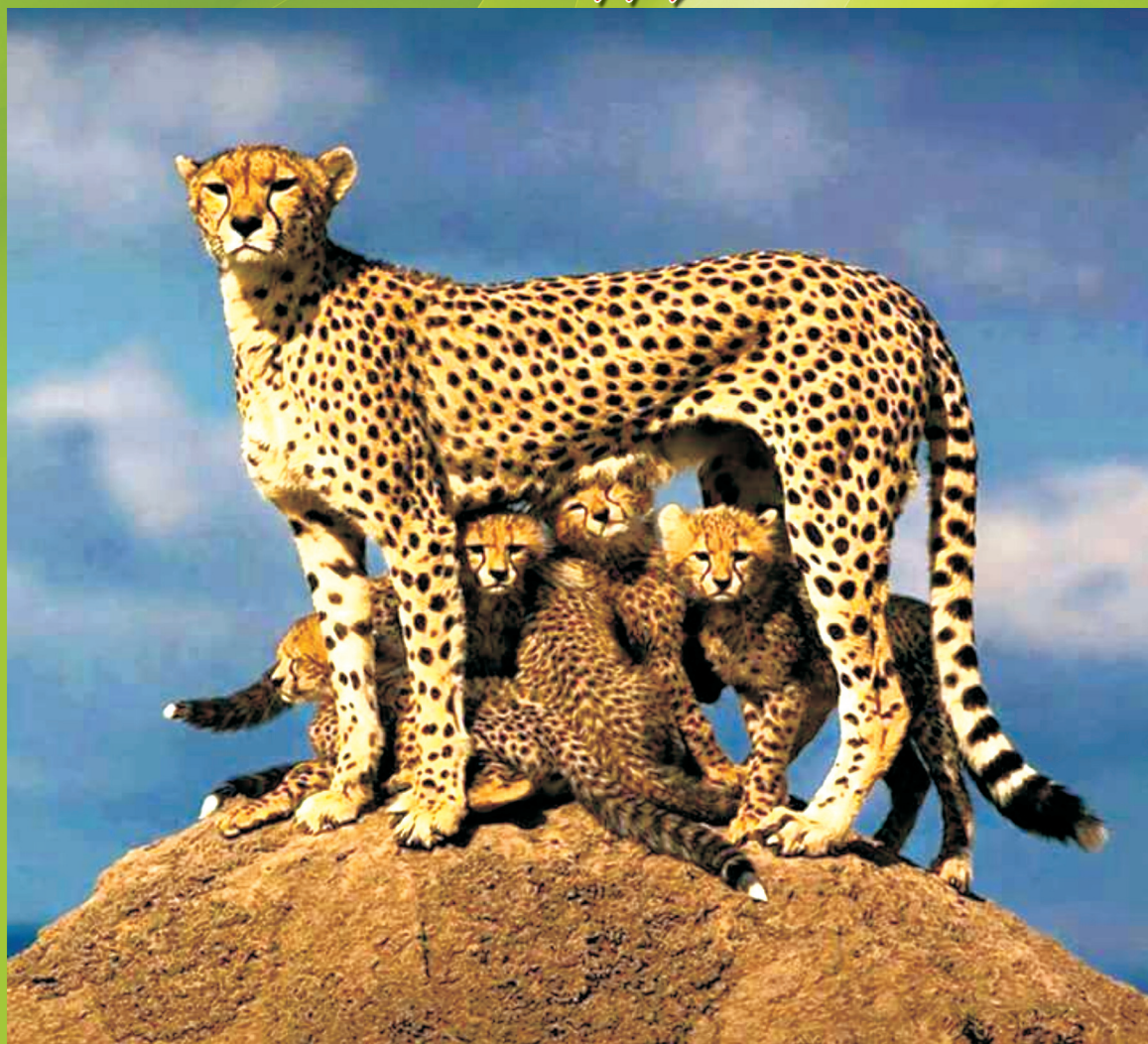
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**FEBRUARY-2017**

No.02

*Vana Premi Wishes Happy Maha Shivaratri*



**CHEETAH (*Acinonyx jubatus*) with five cubs**



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# EDITORIAL

**World Wetlands Day:** - A wetland is a land area that is saturated with water, either permanently or seasonally, such that it takes on the characteristics of a distinct ecosystem. Wetlands take many forms including marshes, estuaries, mudflats, ( coastal wetlands that form when mud is deposited by tides or rivers.) mires, (Swamps) (ponds, fens, Bogs) swamps, deltas, coral reefs, billabongs, (an isolated pond left behind after a river changes course.), lagoons, shallow seas, bogs, lakes, and floodplains. There are also human-made wetlands such as fish and shrimp ponds, farm ponds, irrigated agricultural land, (Paddy fields) salt pans, reservoirs, gravel pits, sewage farms and canals. Unfortunately, wetlands are often viewed as wasteland and have long been considered worthless and an impediment to development. More than 64% of the world's wetlands have disappeared since 1900. They have been drained and filled to make way for houses, roads, and farmland. The best example is of Masab Tank of Hyderabad which was in the heart of Hyderabad city but today we are having big colonies in tank's area. The wetlands of our country are under tremendous stress due to rapid urbanization, industrialization and agricultural intensification. In fact wetlands are amongst the most productive ecosystems on the Earth. Wetlands support diverse and

unique habitats. World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year on 2 February. This day marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar. There are totally 2165 wetland sites in the world, and 26 sites in India which are recognized by the Ramsar.

World Wetlands Day is an annual opportunity to raise public awareness and promote the value of wetlands. World Wetland Day was celebrated for the first time in 1997 and has grown remarkably since then. Each year, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and groups of citizens at all levels of the community have taken advantage of the opportunity to undertake actions aimed at raising public awareness of wetlands values and benefits in general and the Ramsar Convention in particular. Countries of the globe organize a variety of events to raise awareness such as ; lectures, children's art contests, seminars, nature walks, sampan (a small south Asian Boat) races, community clean-up days, television interviews, letters to newspapers, to the launch of new wetland policies, new Ramsar Sites and new programmes at the national level. Every year a theme is selected to focus attention and help raise public awareness about the value of

wetlands. The last year's (2016) theme was Wetlands for our future: Sustainable Livelihoods. The theme for World Wetlands Day 2017 is Wetlands for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The frequency of disasters worldwide has more than doubled in just 35 years. As per UN Water (UN-Water is an inter-agency entity of the United Nations, endorsed in 2003 for the follow-up process of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.) estimates that 90% of all natural hazards are water-related. 1.35 million People died as a result of disasters between 1996 and 2015. Underdeveloped and some of the developing countries account for 90% of fatalities. In material terms, weather related disasters caused thousands crores worth damage between 1980 and 2014. The recent disaster was a strong tropical cyclone that caused extensive damage and loss of life in eastern India (Andhra Pradesh & Odisha) during October 2014 and it was named as Hud hud. Under projected climate change scenarios, extreme climatic events, floods, droughts and storms are expected to increase frequency and intensity.

Wetlands are a natural buffer against disasters, are highly productive ecosystems that provide the world with nearly two-thirds of its fish harvest, are nature's shock absorbers and play an important role in helping to provide

communities with resilience to natural hazards such as flooding caused by storms, cyclones, and tsunamis. Wetlands act as a natural protective buffer as a natural sponge, absorbing and storing excess rainfall and reducing flooding. During the dry season, wetlands release the stored water, which prevents droughts and water scarcity.

Kerala backwaters, Sundarbans in Kolkata, Kolleru fresh water lake in Andhra Pradesh, Bhitarkanika mangroves and Chilika lake in Odisha, Bhoj wetland in M.P., Kanji wetland in Punjab, Bharatpur wetland of Rajasthan, Nalsarovar lake in Gujarat, Valur lake in J&K, Ranganthittu bird sanctuary of Karnataka are some of the important, wetlands of India which are threatened.

Although we continue to lose wetlands, the rate of loss is decreasing and people are starting to discover how valuable wetlands are. (Kolleru is best example where everybody is trying to reduce the area of sanctuary) Though there are very good laws in our country for protection of wetlands but political will is not there and implementation of laws is very poor. There is no proper regulatory framework for conservation of wetlands in India. In Telangana State there were thousands of tanks, lakes, and rivers, which were irrigating agricultural fields,

and attracting many species of birds including migratory birds, but due to our negligence today they all have dried up and we have lost them. The problem of deteriorating water quality is particularly more alarming in the case of small water bodies such as lakes, tanks, ponds and rivers. I have seen River Musi flowing to brim, from the heart of city of Hyderabad but today it is only infected and stinking small *nala* (in spite of G.O Ms. No 111 is in force). Wetlands in India account for 4.7% of the total geographical area of the country. These wetlands provide numerous ecosystem goods and services, but are under stress.

The following are some of the benefits of wetlands. Wetland vegetation reduces erosion along lakes and stream banks by reducing forces associated with wave action. Many species of fish utilize wetland habitats for spawning, food sources, and as habitat. Wetlands can slow down the speed of runoff water, minimizing the frequency of streams and rivers to reach catastrophic flood levels. Some wetlands serve as a source of ground water recharge. By detaining surface waters that would otherwise quickly flow to distant lakes or rivers, and finally to ocean, the water can percolate into the ground and help ensure long-term supplies of quality ground water. Some wetlands are ground-water discharge areas; they receive ground water

even during dry periods. This helps reduce the impact of short-term droughts on rivers and streams. By trapping and holding water, wetlands store nutrients and pollutants in the soil, allowing cleaner water to flow in to the body of water beyond or below the wetland. Vegetation, like cattails, can absorb some of the pollutants that remain in the soil. Wetlands also moderate water flows, providing time for sediments to settle out before the water is released to other wetlands, lakes, or streams. Less sediment means clearer waters and a better environment for aquatic life. Threatened or endangered species live in or depend on wetlands. This includes plants and animals. Wetlands are great places to enjoy nature. Wetlands provide economic commodities such as cranberries and fish and provide spatial amenities to developments. Many wild animals depend on wetlands for homes and resting spots. Fish, amphibians, reptiles, aquatic insects and certain mammals need wetlands as a place for their young to be born and grow. Wetlands provide ideal locations for research and education.

Vana Premi wishes that we all understand the importance of wetlands and protect wetlands of our country for development and betterment of all living organisms. **QMK**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Happy New Year to you and the Editorial Board!

Your requirement, to be read with my promise, results in the enclosed article for the ensuing issue of VP, on a topical subject of one of our culturally rich States, which is on the brink of collapsing violently inwards. I hope it caters to the tastes of quite a few enlightened readers of the magazine. We have all received the latest issue of the Monthly this side, containing a well-researched and indeed knowledgeable Editorial, commemorating World Braille Day. **Not many might be aware of the problems faced by the concerned group who are visually challenged** that way. The Article -sized ' Letters to the Editor' (by RK Sama and JV Sharma) were quite revealing, followed by thought-provoking articles by Messrs. Sharma, Akula Kishan, D Nagabhushanam, Faizi & Ravichandran, followed further by the educative and relevant legal notes by KBR, as usual, accessed this time after painstaking search through KLJ, via Internet, after making a deep study of it. The said 'Notes' is a regular feature in VP and a treat to behold. **How I wish he also contributes some 'Notes' to 'Vana Vikas' which too has wide readership.** In tune with the trend followed this time, is the unusually long two-paged Obituary by Naveen Kumar, his successor on the job of the Veterinarian, in graphic detail, which was with the **Hyderabad Zoo, maintained by the Forest Department.** Kudos for bringing out the Issue on time, with interesting features, despite the fact that your son from, Australia (with his family) was on a biennial visit at your place during the crucial period. Sincerely

Dr. Raghotham Rao Desai

*A boy was in a taxi eating Chocolate, then he took another one, than a man next to him said "Do you know that will damage your teeth" The boy replied "my grandfather lived 123 years" The man asked "was it because of eating Chocolates" The boy replied " He was always minding his own business.*

# CHEETAHS

## *Acinonyx jubatus*

The fastest land animal in the world, the cheetah is a marvel of evolution. The cheetah's slender, long-legged body is built for speed. Cheetahs are tan in color with black spots all over their bodies. They can also be distinguished from other big cats by their smaller size, spotted coats, small heads and ears and distinctive "tear stripes" that stretch from the corner of the eye to the side of the nose.

**Diet:** Cheetahs eat mainly gazelles, wildebeest calves, impalas and smaller hoofed animals.

**Population:** In 1900, there were over 100,000 cheetahs across their historic range. Today, an estimated 9,000 to 12,000 cheetahs remain in the wild in Africa. In Iran, there are around 200 cheetahs living in small isolated populations. When cheetahs are running, they use their tails to help them steer and turn in the direction they want to go, like the rudder of a boat. The last three cheetahs in India were shot by the Maharajah of Surguja in 1948. A female was sighted in the Koriya district in 1951. It is also reported that last Cheetah was sighted in Cuddapah district of Andhra Pradesh in 1953.

**Range:** Historically cheetahs were found throughout Africa and Asia from South Africa to India. They are now confined to parts of eastern, central and southwestern Africa and a small portion of Iran.

**Behavior:** Found mostly in open and partially open savannah, cheetahs rely on tall grasses for camouflage when hunting. They are diurnal (more active in the day) animals and hunt mostly during the late morning or early evening. Only half of the chases, which last from 20 - 60 seconds, are successful.

Cheetahs knock their prey to the ground and kill with a suffocating bite to the neck. They must

eat quickly before they lose the kills to other bigger or more aggressive carnivores.

Cheetahs are also typically solitary animals. While males sometimes live with a small group of brothers from the same litter, females generally raise cubs by themselves for about a year. Unlike other big cats, cheetahs cannot roar. However, they can purr on both inhale and exhale, like domestic cats!

**Reproduction: Mating Season:** Throughout the year. **Gestation:** Around 3 months. **Litter size:** 2-4 cubs

Cubs are smoky in color with long, woolly hair – called a mantle – running down their backs. This mantle is thought to camouflage cubs in grass, concealing them from predators. Mothers move cubs to new hiding places every few days. At 5 - 6 weeks, cubs follow the mother and begin eating from their kills.

King cheetah

The king cheetah is a variety of cheetah with a rare mutation for cream-colored fur marked with large, blotchy spots and three dark, wide stripes extending from their neck to the tail. In 1926 Major A. Cooper wrote about an animal he had shot near modern-day Harare. Describing the animal, he noted its remarkable similarity to the cheetah, but the body of this individual was covered with fur as thick as that of a snow leopard and the spots merged to form stripes. He suggested that it could be a cross between a leopard and a cheetah. After further similar animals were discovered, it was established they were similar to the cheetah in having non-retractable claws – a characteristic feature of the cheetah. (Please see last cover page for photo)

# FOREST BEATS AND MANAGEMENT IN OLDEN DAYS

By  
**J. V. Sharma**

On New Year Day 2017, I received a surprise call from an unexpected quarter. The caller identified himself as "T. V. Ragarajan from Chennai". It was sufficient for me to orient my bearings. Though I did not happen to work under him, we both were in the service of Andhra Pradesh Forest Department in contemporary period and he held senior positions retiring as Special Secretary to Government in the cadre of PCCF. In that way we were not strangers to each other. He was a field forester with impeccable credentials and known for his no-nonsense attitude towards men and matters. More than the unexpected call what surprised me to no end is the topic which bothered him forcing him to talk to me. He was on call for 10 minutes 24 seconds and I remained a listener all through. The issue that agitated him is the plight of the protective staff which comprised of the Forest Guards and Foresters (now Forest Beat Officers & Forest Section Officers), particularly the former, in the Forest Department. He lamented that they have been burdened with unwieldy jurisdiction with none to help and made to discharge regulatory functions against odds, often in hostile environment. Their genuine problems at the grass-root level have never been addressed and they are held accountable for any and every omission on field without considering whether it is wanton or beyond his realm. Acknowledging my humble contribution in highlighting forest and allied matters, he pointed out that no write-up of substance from my side had appeared in *Vana Premi* on this topic. Needless to say, he desired the matter to be placed for serious discussion among the fraternity.

I owe a personal explanation. The issue raised by him certainly deserved serious discussion not only among the retired foresters but more seriously by the serving fraternity as well, not now but decades ago. But it did not happen. It did indeed occur to me many a time to place my views on the matter in public domain but desisted from doing it for two reasons; one, there is one full-fledged service association for the affected category to take care of their interests and it is seen to be quite active and vociferous. They could be having their own priorities. Secondly, the issue is beset with administrative dynamics which bring into focus the vision, wisdom and mindset of administrators who did or did not play their role as they should have. As it would be a critical study of the past, it may ruffle quite a few feathers. Incidentally, Mr. Rangarajan, during his conversation told me that he had raised the issue several times with the Head of the Department and Senior Officials and their

reaction was; any increase in number of beats will only increase corruption in the Department. A full-fledged debate means a no-holds barred appraisal of situation which may prove to be inconvenient and embarrassing. Sensitive matters, if possible, are better allowed to lie low. Mr. TVR, having spent nearly three decades of his 36 years of service in the field and seen and monitored the field situation closely, has now raised the issue and his anguish is understandable and is justified. It is human nature to hide the unpleasant truth for either modesty or for fear of loss of self-esteem. Not many realize that concealing fire behind the linen not only burns the linen but would also hurt the person. The fact that when a person of Mr. TVR's stature could not make the 'powers' of the time to look at the issue in proper perspective, it should well-nigh be impossible for lesser mortals to do anything meaningful.

The discussion is about the plight of staff at the lowest rung of Forest Department. Having been closer to field or rather being even a part of it as Ranger, I had the misfortune of being witness to some unfortunate events. My narration holds good only for Telangana as I did not have the opportunity of having a feel of ground truth in Andhra Region.

It would be incorrect to look at the issue only in its noticeable aspects. It has several dimensions which influence the course of events over a long period in time capsule. A serious discussion over the issue needs a thorough understanding of the situation prevalent at various periods of Department's history of over 100 year. So, it is perhaps advisable to view the issue in a holistic manner to see it in the right perspective which also implies going into unpleasant aspects. Country has travelled a great distance from the days of non-communication to a stage now when everything under the sun is debated in the open in the name of transparency, freedom of expression, public interest etc. I remember people in general and persons in responsible positions in particular were extremely reticent / hesitant to utter the word "corruption". Now, it is a *Mantra* religiously recited by everyone. This is an explanation from my side to justify what I will be saying in this article.

The issue raised by Mr. TVR is grave in so far as Forest Department is concerned. Forest Guards in-charge of the Beats is the primary custodians of the forests at the field level and the well-being of forests depends upon them to a very great extent. It goes without saying that this particular level should be deemed as the most crucial and therefore be made as strong and self-reliant as possible in every conceivable way. Mainly, three things count for the success of any institution and in the case of the 'Forest Beat'; One, it should comprise of a practically viable jurisdiction making it possible for the beat in-charge to manage; Second, the beat guard be provided with necessary logistic support to enable him to function without depending upon others, and thirdly, the rules and procedures that guide the working of the Beat Guard should be purpose oriented, effective,

practicable and equitable.

Objectives always sound fine to hear and good to read. Seldom do they take shape in practice. While what can be seen in print looks benign, there are a host of other factors that cast shadow on the working of a Beat Guard. Firstly, it is the extent of beat jurisdiction. Despite practicing forest administration for over hundred years, clear-cut guidelines are not evolved in this regard. We tend to keep the beat area less in vulnerable terrain and unduly large in the interior areas. Little do we realize that security of the forest cannot be guaranteed on the yardstick of distances? Deeper and interior areas are as vulnerable as those adjacent to habitations in these days of innovation. Once the forests nearer to consumption centers become poor in vegetation, people are bound to travel longer distances for their needs. Normally, a Forest Beat comprised of about 10 Sq. Km. of forests (not to speak of interspersing non-forest geographical area) and the Forest Guard is required to protect it. He is stationed in a village in or around the forests in his charge. It is obvious that he is pitted against a host of problems arising out of villagers' requirements from forests for which his response has to be invariably "NO". Neither the rules permit concessions nor can the local requirements be compromised. No forest officer ever bothered to know how the Forest Guard is managing the show. They have been always demanding of the Beat Guard for any and every work of the Department. In the very early days of my entry in to Forest Department, a senior officer of high rectitude, while advising me how to conduct myself in the Department, said "Look here, Sharma, Don't ever accept any excuses from the Forest Guards; just order, they will deliver. They are resourceful and can manage any situation". The said officer cannot be faulted for any ulterior intentions. He meant to convey that the Forest Guards enjoy great deal of goodwill in their jurisdiction which can make departmental functioning easy. This was the situation in 1957. This is not the view held by the said officer alone. It may be convenient now for the officers of that era to disagree with the statement and deny but the fact remains that all officers followed the dictum in practice and never bothered to find out the secret behind the "Goodwill" enjoyed by the FG.

It should be pertinent to cite my own observation in this context. At the time of States Reorganization in 1956, a vast chunk of forest of about 35000 acres, a part of Manikgarh RF of Rajura Range (?) of *Marathwada* was given to AP. It was made a part of Utnoor Range of Adilabad Division. One single Forest Guard was in charge of this entire area which also included a dozen villages. It was pristine forests far away from the Range headquarters, literally without any communication facility. It was adjacent to Daboli Forest Block of more than one lakh acres extent under the protective charge of three other Forest Guards. These four Beats were under a Forester with headquarters at Daboli whose jurisdiction thus comprised nearly one and half lakh acres of forest

area. To cut the sad story short, now there hardly remain isolated patches of few thousand acres of forests in the area. Even the survival of the remnants is not attributable to our protection skills –the area was considered unfit even to encroach.

The plight of a Forest Guard in discharging regulatory functions is equally awesome. He has to go patrolling the forests alone. His own meagre salary does not permit him to engage any helpers. In case he detects an offence, he needs the witnesses to draw a *panchnama*. There will be none to his rescue in dealing with aggressive and violent offenders. All the places do not have FG's quarters. He needs a dwelling place. As against this, every villager in the vicinity of forests depends upon forests. They need fuelwood. Farmers need wood for agricultural implements and thorny fencing material for their fields to protect it from wild animals. They graze the cattle in the forests. Very poor and primitive tribes of the past depended upon forests even for roots, fruits and tubers as their sustenance. Forest Rule Book did not contain any provision for free enjoyment of these necessities. Procedures put in place for supply of some were seen cumbersome. The Forest Administration or the Government in the past never thought it necessary to address the problem. The Forest Guard at the grass-root level is left to fend himself. Option before the Forest Guard was; compromise with local population or perish.

People do enjoy their needs whether permitted or not. Thus people had availed their needs of firewood, small timber for agricultural implements & hut construction etc. for decades. Evidently the softer of the options is exercised. This is in short the story of ground level dynamics of forest administration in the past for several decades. And it is also the story of the "Goodwill" mentioned above.

But the days were different. There was a method in the madness. Barring occasional breach, the people never took undue advantage over the Forest Guard and never entered the forests without watch. In all fairness, it must be conceded that the Forest Guard too never exploited the situation for gain. I have not seen a Forest Guard who amassed fabulous wealth. Stray examples of greedy persons ended in misery and hardship. A kind of balanced arrangement existed off the record. It is an undeniable truth. Ironically, it must also be said in this context that the so called arrangement, which clearly is not acceptable on ethical grounds, facilitated the administration in many ways in as much as the superiors always heavily depended on the Forest Guards for getting things done at field level.

But not many in the Department took serious note of the situation and realized that the arrangement is denting its image. They took the situation for granted. It can however be said with great deal of conviction that matters were never out of control and there was respect or fear among the public

for the law. Stigma earned was unduly disproportionate to exceedingly low level indiscretion. The diligence and hard work done by protective staff is monumental. Forest protection was near perfect and their contribution in consolidation of forests was stupendous. The protective staff mustered unstinted support from the local population to make things easy for the Department.

It can be safely said that the Forest Guard was the earliest of State machinery to share the travails of rural life with locals. Revenue and Police personnel did visit those god forsaken areas occasionally, but only when absolutely necessary. It was different in the case of a forester. He had to live close to his *Karmabhoomi*. He thus won the confidence of the people and was respected greatly. Being a government servant, he might have been over-bearing to some extent, a common trait among people and compares poorly with present day high handedness. It is unfortunate that he is shown in poor light for no great sins. He can't be accused of fleecing the public, a canard often aired. Should any one care to study the socio-economic condition of people in those days, it was primitive farming with abysmally low productivity and there was stark poverty with people on the brink of starvation. There was practically no cash flow. There was hardly any who could afford to go for a big house needing large quantity of timber. One can imagine as to what a bribe giver can spare. Even otherwise, there must be a reason behind corruption. People were so poor they were content with huts which hardly needed any timber.

It is humanly impossible for any Forest Guard to be present at every place in the forest at the same time. People can easily sneak into forest resulting in stray felling. He is not excused for this inadvertent omission. Forests are inspected periodically and such fellings are enumerated and disciplinary action is initiated against the beat Guard despite his innocence. It is vicarious responsibility. No leniency is available under rules even for honest conduct and good faith. There are instances where the provision is blatantly misused to punish the FG. A FG was charged for a destruction of some Rs. 170/ detected during beat inspection. A Show Cause Notice was issued to him indicating a punishment of removal from service. He was advised by his well-wishers not to respond to a demand of bribe from the person processing the file on the ground the government loss was meagre and not serious enough to warrant removal. But to his chagrin, he was removed from service and it took him quite some time to get his job back on appeal. This is only an example of the vulnerability of the FGs. The Forest Guard also paid heavy price in course of service. He faced intimidation, assaults and other hardships in the line of duty. Taking on an adversary goes with price. Such instances are innumerable. Above all, in the official plane, he is accountable for any irregularity in his jurisdiction. This is the way the beat administration was run in earlier era.

Situation started changing from mid-sixties. The ethical balance that existed for decades started

changing drastically. People started tending to be less and less law abiding. Even the personnel had become permissive, all to the detriment of forests. It is apparent that not much of thought was given by senior officers of the Department in the past to vital aspects of protection in the earlier days. They were content that the system was running smoothly but failed to foresee the future. If they wanted changes, they could have done in those days. Now the balance of advantage has clearly slipped away from the Department and is firmly in the grip of ruling politicians who do not look beyond their own interests.

It is however seen that the Forest Department in Telangana has been reorganized recently and significant changes have taken place in its structure. It happened as a sequel to reorganization of Districts in the State. Ten existing Districts have been reorganized into 31 Districts. It is said that the criteria adopted for determining forest jurisdiction was to make it co-terminus with district jurisdiction and to station a District Forest Officer to be available to the Collector. The main features of departmental edifice at the level of Circle and below as reorganized now in brief are:

1. 12 Territorial Circles in place of 11 and 3 Functional Circles of Research and Development, State Trading Corporation and Director of Zoo Parks. Each territorial Conservator in charge of a Circle will have jurisdiction over two or three Districts.
2. Of the 31 Districts, 28 Districts will have District Forest Officers. Three Districts will be sharing the services of adjoining DFOs. The post of the District Forest Officer is a new innovation.
3. 37 Forest Divisions have been formed. Designation of Division In-Charge which was Divisional Forest Officer earlier has since been changed to Forest Divisional Officer like Revenue Divisional Officer of Revenue Department. Due to paucity of forest areas, 18 Districts will not have Forest Divisions and they will be directly managed by the District Forest Officers.
4. 185 Ranges have been formed in place of 106 earlier. Average forest area in a Range has come down to 145 Sq. km from 254 Sq. km.
5. 469 forest Sections have been reorganized into 831 Sections. Average area of a Section has come down from 57 Sq. km to 32 Sq. km.
6. Forest Beats which were 1428 earlier have been reorganized into 3132 recording more than 100% increase. Beat area too has come down from 19 Sq. km to 9 Sq. km.

While it is too early to sit on judgment on the reorganization *per se* (it took place in October 2016), the reduction in forest jurisdiction of Protective staff i.e. Beats and Sections, is long overdue and therefore most welcome, given the threats the forests are exposed to. There should not be complaints of unwieldy jurisdiction hereafter and forest protection should improve with this reorganization.

But as stated earlier, this is only a part of the problem. Main problem is of intensive and critical study of the problem in all its aspects, structural, systemic, legal, logistic and professional.

# SAMA VS. SHARMA

By  
**K.B.R Reddy**

The purpose of writing this essay is to review the two letters to the Editor by Sama and Sharma that have been published in the Vana Premi of January 2017. Sama (better known as Ramesh Kumar Sama or R.K Sama) is no stranger to Vana Premi and its readers. He is a retired IFS officer of Gujarat cadre and an old-boy of SFRC. After retirement he took up a job as Regional Manager of Water and Sanitation Management Organization (WASMO), an autonomous Institution established by Government of Gujarat. Sama worked with headquarters at Bhuj and his area of operation was spread over a few villages in Kutch district bordering Pakistan. In this area, there was acute scarcity of water. His dedicated work was successful in improvement of water resource and construction of Water Closets (W.Cs.) with septic tanks. Suresh Deshpande of Maharashtra, after visiting the area, has written a beautiful article – WASMO-DA-SAMA, published in Vana Premi of June 2005. This work and achievement of R.K. Sama can certainly be regarded as fore-runner of Swacha Bharat concept conceived now.

R.K. Sama in his own words had written a paper – Community Managed Water Supply System – published in Vana Premi of June 2008. This paper succinctly describes the good work as

“Decentralized Community Managed Water Supply System in Gujarat State”

Jayanthi Venkateshwara Sharma (Popular as J.V. Sharma or simply Sharma to his friends) needs no introduction to the readers of Vana Premi and alumni of SFRC. He is a retired IFS officer of A.P. cadre and an old-boy of SFRC. Many papers written by him on varied subjects are published in Vana Premi. Although his health and domestic responsibilities do not permit him to be as active as he would like to be, yet he zealously participates and contributes substantially in many of the programmes of retired forest officers. He is a source of encouragement and a tower of strength for Van Premi. He had been its Associate Editor for a long time and also a short time editor. A man with poor health and advanced age, yet his zest for life does not die and his courage to fight problems of health is exemplary. He is a good analyst on important issues - social, political and legal.

Sharma was opposed to political agenda and populist move to bring forth legislation which finally emerged by its short name as Forest Rights Act in 2005. He has been writing against the idea since as far back as 2000. Finally when it became a law, passing through many vicissitudes, he could not resist his zeal and

enthusiasm; he filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the High Court of Andhra Pradesh in 2007. Editor Qamar Mohd. Khan called him a 'Crusader' against the FRA. Rightly so. He finds many reasons to say that the Law is constitutionally invalid. The issue is of course debatable. The matter is now before the Supreme Court. Sri S.S. Joshy from Karnataka complimented him in the following words:

"His vision and mission, passion and erudition, enabled him to walk the tight-rope of his crusade with élan, zeal and confidence."

While many other individuals and organizations challenged the validity of the FRA, Sama is the pioneer and is in the forefront, often giving instructions to the senior advocates at Supreme Court. He has briefly mentioned his contribution in his fighting for a cause in his speech as Convener of the Technical Session.

After describing the personalities of the two great stalwarts, I will now turn my attention to their common subject: 'Introduction of Technical Session' in the recent SFRC Meet at Hyderabad. Sama eulogized our monthly journal and appreciated the annual meet at the outset in his letter when he said, "Vana Premi stands as an example far and wide, as far as forestry related magazines are concerned.....It was enjoyable meet in 2016."

Appreciating on the subject touched, Sama commented on Technical Session as "it did not

serve the purpose which was set out in the Convener's speech". He was critical on the formation of a Society of Foresters of India (SOFI). This thought, if put in place, would build an advisory society or a pressure group, Sama feels. He wrote further: "It could be to decimate (probably he meant 'disseminate') knowledge, build skills and at best build public opinion." The example of the Institution of Engineers (India) is cited which survived for a pretty long period after its formation and I am sure it would have definitely done some good work. Sama was clear in his mind on the suggestion relating to SOFI, that it is a 'loud thinking'. He said, the proposal must find takers not only among foresters but also the political establishment. It is a herculean task, all said and done, far beyond the resources and capacity of SFRC alumni.

In the programme sheet it was perhaps mentioned as Technical Session and Sama lamented that, "it did not revoke (the word ought to have been 'invoke') any response from the audience as the format was not allowed them to participate. It was in fact an idea of holding Technical Session in future annual meets. This required more time and the Alumni Meet in future may have to be extended at least by one more day or cut short the programme of visiting places.

Whatever it is worth, an experienced forester

and an alumnus of SFRC, who retired as PCCF and HOFF of the state of AP, commended the idea in his speech. Sharma recalled the proposal of forming a federation of retired alumni of SFRC and other Rangers Colleges in the Country, at the SFRC alumni Meet at Aurangabad. The idea was opposed even when the draft Byelaws of the proposed Federation were finalized and put up for approval. In spite of the fact that the proposal was backed by the elder foresters and the guest speakers, it did not take off.

Sama is very optimistic about the next SFRC Alumni Meet, probably in Gujarat, for formulating several programmes. We are passing through a period when we are experiencing acute problem of Water, Forest and Land (*JAL, JUNGAL ZAMEEN*). Water being the major commodity from the forests, it is needless to say that all forests need to be well protected and well managed.

Padmanabha Reddy, in his article, on 'Foreign Aid in Forestry' has made a good analysis of the background of the various projects and their futility. According to him population pressure and long gestation period of forest species, forest schemes do not evoke support from public and interest from politicians. He deserved the compliments by Sharma our effort should therefore be to educate people and politicians on the benefits that flow from the forests.

Problems due to population explosion are numerous. In the days of Cleghorne and Brandis,

protection of forests due to biotic factors was minimal or nil. Many years after, the need for conservation of forests was felt; so, Forest Conservation Act was enacted. Protection of wildlife became necessary as the protection offered to wild animals and their habitat was imminent and therefore, the Wildlife Protection Act was made by the Parliament. Pollution of air, water and environment was needed; therefore, the anti-pollution laws have come into effect. The Parliament passed the Biological Diversity Act with a view to preserve Biodiversity in the country. State Legislatures have enacted laws for protection of trees. The courts have rejected all pleas that were taken to question the validity of some these laws including the recent amendments to the Forest Act and upheld the validity of these laws. Forest Officers, directly or indirectly, are made responsible for carrying out the objectives of these laws. Therefore it is imperative that special courses have to be conducted to train the forest officers. There should be a forum to project some of these ideas.

I had a cursory glance at the book, 'Foot Prints of Developments' by Sama. It shall be our endeavour to go through the contents. The author says, the book is interesting. If it is so, we will agree to agree with him rather than agree to disagree. ISN'T THE ESSAY LIKE SAMA VEDA, CHANTING BY SHARMA? I feel this would bring cheers to the readers. Jai Hind and Jai Vana Premi.

# MONKEY BUSINESS

By  
**M. Padmanabha Reddy**

In Ramayana Epic, Hanuman played an important role in locating Sri Sita after her abduction he was instrumental in killing large number of demons and helped Lord Rama to conquer the demon king Ravana. Hanuman was a staunch devotee of Lord Rama and thus earned the name Rama Bakth Hanuman. Grandmothers used to tell children to recite Anjaneya Strotham to drive away evil spirits.

In Kaliyuga every village in India has Anjaneya temple. People revere this monkey God as a protector from evil spirits. Since last 5 decades things started changing, the protector turned into trouble maker. Shrinkage and degradation of forests has driven the monkeys into villages and towns. Herds of monkeys are invading the agricultural fields and habitations causing immense loss to people. The orchards, agricultural crops like maize, groundnut etc. and vegetable fields are the targets. In habitations they pounce on fruit and vegetable vendors for food. They enter the kitchen in a right royal way snatch the eatables and disappear. People in general and Hindus in particular do not feel for the damage the monkeys cause. Near the places of worship, the monkeys snatch away the fruits and coconut from the worshipers and nobody complains.

In urban areas the veterinary officers in Municipalities are in charge of catching monkeys through trained staff and release them in the forests. Monkeys are very intelligent and it is a herculean task to catch them. They take very long time to enter the cage and even if one or two enter, the rest of the troop just disappears from the area temporarily. The caged monkeys have to be maintained till permission from forest department is given to release them in the forests. In one incident the GHMC after catching monkeys took them to forest areas of Adilabad and wanted to release them. The local people strongly objected for release of monkeys in their neighborhood. Since last couple of years GHMC is inviting tenders for monkey catchers but none showed interest with the result no monkeys in the GHMC are trapped. Monkey menace is spread all over India. In Shimla a scheme of Rescue and Rehabilitation of monkeys was taken up a decade back wherein the monkeys in habitations are captured and put in Rescue centers and released after sterilization of adult monkeys. In the state of Telangana field Director Kawal tiger reserve prepared a project – pilot project for Rescue and Rehabilitation (R&R) Centre for

monkeys. The three species of monkeys i.e. Bonnet monkey, Rhesus monkey and Common Langur are found in the state, while the former two varieties are abundant, the Langur is rare and not as menace as his cousins. It is generally believed that Langurs drive away the monkeys. The pilot project prepared by the Project Director Kawal was submitted to government for approval with an estimated cost of Rs. 18 crores during 2015. The scheme envisages establishment of 5 monkey R&R Centers at one for each circle to mitigate monkey menace in the state. Information was collected from divisions regarding the population of monkeys in habitations. Rough estimates put it that there are about 3 lakh monkey populations causing crores of rupees loss to the people in the state of Telangana.

Center of Science and Environment (C.E.C.), New Delhi conducted a study of monkey menace in India. As per their study there are two main reasons for migration of monkeys from forests to human habitations. One is shrinkage of habitat and non-availability of food in degraded forests. It is reported that monkeys spending anything from 8 to 10 hours in a day in the forests to gather food. Whereas in human habitation it is anything from few minutes to couple of hours to get food by damaging orchards, vegetable garden agricultural crops or by stealing from fruit venders or from the houses. With degradation of

forests food and water are hard to find. Added to it there is a lurking danger from predators like panthers. In human habitation plenty of food and protection is multiplying the population of monkeys. They may not like to go back to forests. In rural areas the country tiled roofs are subjected to heavy damage from monkeys. For no reason they disturb the tiled roofs leading to leakages. Poor people have to spend lot of amount for repairs.

In the first week of January Telangana Assembly discussed at length the problems from monkeys. Some members suggested that Langurs which it is believed, will drive away should be used as a biological control. Intervening in the discussions Hon'able Chief Minister has narrated an incident. In a village in Kareemnagar people contributed rupees Eighty thousand and brought a Langur. In first one or two days the Langur drove away the stray monkeys, but on third day a group of monkeys attacked the Langur and the Langur has to run away for its dear life.

The Hon'able Chief Minister of Telangana is well aware of the menace of monkeys. As a part of Haritha Haram he often recites a phrase "*Kothulu Adaviloniki Vapasu Povali, Vaanalu Ooriloniki Vapasu Ravali* (Monkeys should go back to forests and Rains should come back to villages). This slogan indicates the vision of the government to improve green cover in the

state by massive tree planting (Haritha Haram) and at the same time to get rid of monkey menace.

So far so good, but the proposal of government to plant wild fruit trees in forests, so that the monkeys will go back to their natural habitat is a long term perspective, it may take two to three decades for the trees now planted to bear fruits and yield results, but meanwhile as a temporary relief the proposals prepared by field Director Kawal Tiger reserves needs examination and implementation. Unfortunately the scheme was never taken seriously in the E.F.S&T department of government of Telangana. When I represented to Prl. Secretary in 2015 to approve the pilot project, the E.F.S&T department informed me that "The proposal is under active consideration. Government of India has been addressed for financial assistance for project. It was rather amusing that the total cost of the project is Rs.18 crores and for this paltry amount state government is awaiting for the financial assistance from Government of India. It is understood that finally the government have agreed for establishment of one R&R and Centre

at Nirmal forest division with a cost of 2.21 crores for which site is selected and awaiting for release of funds. Meanwhile, as an in-trim measure (till the above scheme is approved) the process of capturing monkeys and releasing them in the wild was sanctioned at a cost of Rs.55 lakhs. Accordingly a budget of Rs. 11 lakhs to each of 5 circles was released (during 2015-16) to take operations like preparation of Trap cages and training of staff in capture methods. Unfortunately this in-trim measure was a non-starter.

Narla Sammyya resident of Mulugu, Warangal district has succumbed to injuries of monkey bites. 4 women in Saidabad (Hyderabad) were injured by monkey attacks. Like this there are many monkey attacks on people only few are reported. Further hundreds of crores of rupees worth of Agriculture produced, like fruits, vegetables, maize, groundnut etc. is damaged by these monkeys. The government of Telangana should seriously think over the problem and provide required funds to forest department to mitigate the problem of monkeys by establishing R&R Centers.

***All fingers are not in the same length. But when they bend, all stands equal. Life becomes easy when we bend and adjust all situations.***

# IMPLOSIVE MANIPUR

By

**Dr. Raghottam Rao Desai**

**“The world is a book, and those who do not wish to travel or do not desire to know how the physical features exist of several places far off, as also what the aspirations of the inhabitants happen to be, read only a page”**

.... Saint Augustine

**(Sources to information:**

**After getting acquainted with the facts about his State of Manipur, with Falguni Rajkumar — whose wife Smt. Neerja Rajkumar was the Commissioner-cum-Administrator, to whom I had to report as Project Director (Watershed Development Programme,) some thirty years ago — both of whom belonged to 1972-batch of IAS, another occasion came famously, twenty years later, when my grandson Dr. Aashith Sridhar got admitted in MD (General Medicine) at the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal, to know more details of that remote region, and the prevailing situation).**

**1. Origin and Background:**

Manipur attained statehood in 1972, nine years after Nagaland, and that too without comparable Constitutional Safeguards. **The delayed inclusion of Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule had hurt their cultural pride** who thought they deserved a Separate State before others, given their long history of self-governance, in spite of

the fact that Manipuri was the first Tibeto-Burman Language in this category — **the only language of the North-East with an indigenous script— while Manipuri dance is among the region’s two classical dances!**

The Valley, dominated by Meitei community which is **a tribal elite**, is completely surrounded by hills, home to over 30 tribes who speak languages that are mostly mutually unintelligible. The tribal elite secured access to higher education and cultural jobs, due to reservation, and received political attention, thanks to armed insurgencies. And they could settle in the Valley, eventually controlling the valley’s supply-lines. It resulted into a stagnant economy, for the tribes, and unhealthy competition with ‘outsiders’ for land & jobs, and curbs on civil liberties, imposed under the pretext of fighting insurgency, thereby instilling a sense of siege into the Valley, which had further been aggravated after 1997, by the ‘secretive talks’ between the Center and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland. Nagaland is now claiming more than half of Manipur for ‘Greater Nagaland’, with an ulterior expansionist motive.

**2. The ground-realities:**

The burning desire for their identity and the imposed economic crisis pushed Manipuris to

the extreme and their patience bursting at seams, forced them to call for severance of bonds with the Main land (India): and de-Sanskritisation of the culture, as also make a loud demand for the reinstatement of pre-18<sup>th</sup> Century Script and religion, which were suppressed during an earlier period of it, by a king of purportedly uncertain and apocryphal lineage who embraced a strand of Bengali Vaishnavism.

The State Government, though, approved the reinstatement of an 'indigenous script' as early as 1980, despite deep disagreement existing over the identification of the 'original' version. Having done that, they should have helped to promote that script. Sadly they did not. So, in 2005 a movement in favor of the 'indigenous script' culminated, and the agitators burnt the State Central Library, which had a big collection of valuable texts in Bengali-Manipuri Script, which compelled the Government to hastily agree to redouble its efforts and introduce the said script in schools and administration. The tribes being familiar with **Manipuri written in Bengali-Manipuri Script**, hence, showed no inclination

to learn yet another script. On the other hand, they sought recognition for Latin, as one of the Scripts, for Manipuri, having the same been introduced by the Church, over the years. The syncretic language — a language born with the amalgamation of different religions, cultures or schools of thoughts — that belonged to everyone, thus got split into several parallel streams, creating so much of confusion, almost bringing the situation to a boiling point.

### 3. Conclusion:

There is a demand for the introduction of permits, a la Nagaland, to limit the influx of outsiders, because of the genuine concerns about territorial implications, by having talks between partisans of 'Greater Nagaland' and the Centre. However, use of Legislature Majority, to impose policies on tribes, may not help the cause. This appears to be the present cause for the State being on the verge to implode, i.e., violently collapse inwards. It is high time the Centre transcends electoral politics and intervenes in the crisis on humanitarian grounds.

*“New friends may be poems but old friends are alphabets....Do not forget alphabets because you will need them to read the poems.” (Shakespeare)*

# WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IS IN PERIL

**Dr. Akula Kishan**

**Introduction:** Many wild species in both plants and animals are yet to be recorded but before their existence is recorded, they are heading towards extinction. There are many reasons for a species becoming endangered in Nature, some of the causes are: excessive exploitation, environment degradation, habitat destruction, illegal trade in animals and their derivatives etc. Wildlife Management is generally applied for solving the problems pertaining to a single wild species at a time, and many a times the conservation projects of single species is not monitored in places where principal single species like Tiger and Elephant are protected. Wildlife Conservation cannot be dealt in isolation without the habitat management. The habitat of wild animals is forests and related environment. The Forest degradation and denudation is rampant across the world and this paper seeks to analyze the situation with reference to Indian context.

**Why to conserve wildlife?** The wild life in India comprises of about 500 species of mammals, 3000 species of birds, reptiles etc. and 30,000 other forms of life.

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru the first Prime Minister of India referred to wild life as '*wild life – that is how we refer to the magnificent animals of our jungles and to the beautiful birds that brighten our lives. I wonder sometimes what these birds and animals think of man and how they would describe him; if they had the capacity to do so. I rather doubt if*

*their description would be very complementary to man. In spite of our culture and civilization, in many ways, man continues to be not only wild but more dangerous than any of the so-called animals. Life would be very dull and colorless if we do not have these magnificent animals and birds to look at and to play with. We should, therefore, encourage as many sanctuaries as possible for preservation of what yet remains of our wild life.'*

The biological pyramid consists of small insects and micro-organisms in the bottom layer and the predators like Tiger, Lion etc. occupy the top of the pyramid. Each layer/level of the pyramid is interrelated and if any level/layer disappears or becomes extinct, the sustainability of the animals in the higher levels will be at stake. The clear example of this kind of situation is the frequent entry of panthers/leopards into villages and towns/cities in search of food and water. The normal habitat of these animals was encroached upon and the food materials such as small animals have disappeared with the vanishing habitat/forests. Therefore, there is no alternative for the predators but to enter the human habitations.

Another example of the animal – plant relationship is found in China, where the sparrows and birds were killed systematically. The small pests in the agricultural crops were removed by the sparrows and birds. As the birds

have been killed by man, the occurrence of pests on crop land increased many fold.

One more example which can be seen in India is the disappearance of the common vulture from the skies. The vulture was nature's scavenger and was seen hovering at all types of places wherever some dead organism was found. The increased use of pesticides in the fodder made the dead animals ingest the chemicals in their body tissues. The vultures thus came into contact with the deadly chemicals and have reached almost the level of extinction within a span of ten years by 97% decline in their population. The importance of conservation of wildlife cannot be understood, as the disappearance of an insect or animal may not have direct visible effect on the locality where they are commonly seen. The absence of these insects and animals can be felt at a later time when some loss or damage, which can be observed, occurs.

The co-existence of man, animal and forests is essential for the survival of man, animal and forests.

The Forest, Wildlife and Environmental policies

**(a) Forest Policies:** There are three forest policies formulated so far to give direction to the forest administration and management of forests and also to define the role of public in the forest protection. These policies help the planner to plan for future forest development with the aims and objectives of the policy in mind. The policy also helps the judiciary in reading the mind of the government and is useful while interpreting the enactments made.

The three policies are:

1. Forest Policy, 1894
2. The Indian Forest Policy, 1952 and
3. The Indian Forest Policy, 1988

**b) Environment Policy:** The policies for environmental management are contained in the National Forest Policy, 1988; the National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development, 1992 and the Policy Statement on Abatement of Pollution, 1992. Some other policies such as the National Agriculture Policy, 2000; National Population Policy, 2000 and National Water Policy, 2002 have also contributed towards environmental management. All of these policies have recognized the need for sustainable development in their specific contexts and formulated necessary strategies to give effect to such recognition.

The National Environmental Policy, 2006 is made to extend the coverage, and fill the gaps that still exist. It is made in response to the national commitment to a clean environment, mandated in the Constitution in Articles 48A and 51A (g) strengthened by judicial interpretation of Article 21. The National Environment Policy is intended to be a guide to action: in regulatory reform, programmes and projects for environmental conservation; and review and enactment of legislation, by agencies of the Central, State, and Local Governments. The dominant theme of this policy is that while conservation of environmental resources is necessary to secure livelihoods and well-being of all, the most

secure basis for conservation is to ensure that people dependent on particular resources obtain better livelihoods from the fact of conservation, than from degradation of the resource.. The policy also seeks to stimulate partnerships of different stakeholders, i.e. public agencies, local communities, academic and scientific institutions, the investment community, and international development partners, in harnessing their respective resources and strengths for environmental management.

**National Wildlife Action Plan:** Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016) is proposed to be replaced by Action Plan for 2017-2031. The draft contains detailed recommendations to be followed in the protected areas. The first and second National Wildlife Action Plans were adopted in 1983 and 2002 respectively. The key areas of focus of this plan includes integration of climate change into wildlife planning, conservation of coastal and marine ecosystem, mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, focus on wildlife health among others.

*(a)Wildlife conservation:* The draft plan places special emphasis on rehabilitation of threatened species along with conserving their habitats like inland aquatic, coastal and marine ecosystems.

*(b)Protection of protected areas:* Protection of protected areas includes ban on certain activities, regulation on tourism and law enforcement.

*(c)Ban on certain activities:* Mining and big irrigation projects would not be permitted in protected areas and wildlife corridors. The plan asks the environment ministry to work with

Ministry of Steel to bar mining activities in Protected Areas and wildlife corridors. Further, it wants proper rehabilitation of degraded and abandoned mining areas. It has classified sand mining as a highly destructive activity in which many stakeholders are involved including politicians. It wants Ministry of water resources to opt for minor irrigation projects instead of big irrigation projects in the protected areas. It has favored the use of water harvesting units like ponds, check dams, and wells etc.

*(d)Tourism:* While the plan encourages tourism in wild life areas, it wants restrictions to be placed on the number of tourists and vehicles entering inside a protected area. It provides for the strict monitoring and regulation of the tourism activities. In case of any conflict between tourism and conservation interests of Protected Areas, the plan categorically favors the conservation interests of Protected Areas. It wants to add emphasis on tourism facilities which are sustainable, eco-friendly, clean and wholesome and moderately priced rather than lavish five star facilities.

*(e)Law enforcement:* The draft calls for setting up of new regional forensic laboratories, a special Tiger protection force, special courts to deal with wildlife crimes such as poaching and smuggling. It has observed that the investigation of wildlife crime still lags behind despite the establishment of the National Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and has called for the capacity building of frontline guards and officers responsible for investigating wildlife crimes

Laws applicable

The following laws are applicable in India

- (1) Indian Forest Act,1927
- (2) The Cattle Trespass Act,1871
- (3) Forest (Conservation) Act,1980
- (4) The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights )Act,2006 { or Forest Rights Act,2006}
- (5) Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act,1972
- (6) The Environment (Protection) Act,1986
- (7) The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act,1977
- (8) The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act,1981
- (9) The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act,1960
- (10) The Biological Diversity Act,2002

All the above laws are administered by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India.

Forest cover

**AREAL EXTENT OF FOREST COVER IN INDIA**

	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	% of total geographical area
1930	869,012	26.4
1975	653,220	19.9
1985	638,460	19.4
1995	630,795	19.2
2005	627,233	19.1
2013	625,565	19.0

While the definition of forest remains ambiguous, felling continues to be a major contributor to climate change. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,

around 90% of the carbon dioxide emissions are caused by land-use change or deforestation, mostly driven by population growth and agricultural expansion.

Two scientific publications showed the extent of forest cover in India. A study published in Biodiversity and Conservation, an international journal, shows a net loss of 243,447 sq. km (28%) in eight decades. According to the Forest Survey of India's (FSI) biennial report for 2015, India's forest cover increased from 640,819 sq km (64.08 Mha) in 1987 to 701,673 sq km (70.17 Mha). So what is the field situation?

The FSI report does not make any distinction between the origins of forest. It includes all land with a tree canopy density of 10% and above and a minimum mapping unit of one hectare. A forest is defined as land spanning more than 1 ha, dominated with native tree species having a minimum stand height of 5 m with an over story canopy cover greater than 10% in the study published in Biodiversity and Conservation, Springer.

**Status of Implementation of Forest Rights Act, 2006:**

An updated status of State-wise implementation of the Act, as per the information collected till 31st October, 2016; 42,43,668 claims (41,30,373 individual and 1,13,295 community claims) have been filed and 17,26,815 titles (16,78,623 individual and 48,192 community claims) have been distributed. A total of 36,86,230 (86.86%) claims have been disposed of.

The extent of forest land for which titles are distributed as on 31.10.2016

Sl.No.	States	Extent of Forest land for which titles distributed (in acres)		
		Individual	Community	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	1,98,633.00	4,34,355.00	6,32,988.00
2	Assam	77,609.17		77,609.17
3	Bihar	0	0	0
4	Chhattisgarh	7,41,318.22	0	7,41,318.22
5	Goa	0	4.35	4.35
6	Gujarat	1,16,119.00	10,81,583.00	11,97,702.00
7	Himachal Pradesh	0.35	0	0.35
8	Jharkhand	81,587.92	85,615.57	1,67,203.49
9	Karnataka	11,166.00	26,274.79	37,440.79
10	Kerala	33,018.12	0	33,018.12
11	Madhya Pradesh	21,10,991.87	0	21,10,991.87
12	Maharashtra	2,31,421.21	19,92,644.78	16,24,065.99
13	Odisha	5,94,668.88	2,83,884.97	8,78,553.86
14	Rajasthan	54,583.29	657.53	55,240.82
15	Tamil Nadu	0	0	0
16	Telangana	8,18,090.52	12,74,327.90	20,92,418.42
17	Tripura	4,34,119.31	91.16	4,34,210.47
18	Uttar Pradesh	18,854.46	1,20,802.06	1,39,656.53
19	Uttarakhand	0	0	0
20	West Bengal	21,321.21	1,004.26	22,325.47
	TOTAL	55,43,503	47,01,245	102,44,747.92

According to WPSI's Wildlife Crime Database there are 20,000 wildlife cases involving more than 400 species that are targeted by poachers and wildlife traders. The Database now has information on about 16,000 wildlife criminals and their associates, along with inter-state wildlife traders, smuggling routes, new poaching and trade methods, plus other relevant information.

Over the years illegal wildlife trade has emerged as a form of Organized Transnational Crime that has threatened the existence of many wild species across the globe. In India, it includes diverse products including mongoose hair; snake skins; Rhino horn; Tiger and Leopard claws, bones, skins, whiskers; Elephant tusks; deer antlers; *shahtoosh* shawl; turtle shells; musk pods; bear bile; medicinal plants; timber and

caged birds such as parakeets, *mynas*, *munias* etc. A large part of this trade is meant for the international market and has no direct demand in India.

India is also a member of the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora) since 1976. CITES is an international agreement between governments that aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. CITES works by subjecting international trade in specimens of selected species listed on Appendices to certain controls.

(To be concluded)

**ONE PAGE CALENDER 2017**

Dates			Months		MAY	AUG	FEB MAR NOV	JUNE	SEPT DEC	APR JULY	IAN OCT
1	8	15	22	29	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
2	9	16	23	30	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON
3	10	17	24	31	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE
4	11	18	25		THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED
5	12	19	26		FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU
6	13	20	27		SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
7	14	21	28		SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT

# EVOLUTION TOWARDS WELLNESS

By  
**NAGABHUSHANAM DASARI**

Share from whatever good things possess in everyday life  
Even tiny support in time gives infinite satisfaction and pleasure  
Worry for not having things cause pain to the heart and soul  
Togetherness gives happiness to everybody on the whole

Instead of scolding the existence of darkness simply  
Lit small light which gives beautiful life overwhelmingly  
Accept result of defeat without any ego open heartedly  
Again one's endeavor certainly leads to glorious victory

Learn how to give shade and breeze from the standing tree  
By extending hands of branches with green leaves free  
Cutaway the wings of all fiercely pinching miseries of life  
On the journey to tranquility with well sharpened knife

Work like needles of clock together with sound relation  
Break not the affectionate emotions with selfish commotion  
Illuminate the lives of illiterates with knowledge of literacy  
Put efforts to eradicate the pollution of poverty from the society

Hygiene atmosphere ensures worldly wellness of the mankind  
Evolves the process of harmonious thinking with open mind  
Protect nature with the motto to attain 33% green cover on the earth  
Dedicated strong resolution energizes fully the humane breath

# THE NOBLE LAUREATE WHOM I WONDER:

By

**P. Visweshwaraiah**

It was a pleasant surprise to meet and talk to the Noble Laureate Prof. Mohammed Yonus during the conference held at Tirupati by Indian Science congress Association. It was on 4<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017, his program was scheduled by ISCA in the thematic building, Srinivasa auditorium of S V University Tirupati. I never thought of an opportunity like this that I could meet a Noble prize winner. Further he was so courteous to meet some of the young scientists and give autographs as well as allowing them to take selfies. I also grabbed an opportunity to go near him and shake hands by introducing myself as retired forest officer who worked for six years in rural development department and participated in promoting Women self-help groups for money savings and self-sustenance. A Sigh of laughter was acknowledged from him saying "good, it is we started first in Bangladesh villages" and allowed me to sit beside him for few moments. As there were several youngsters/Scholars waiting for the opportunity I had to give room. Immediately the General President of ISCA, Prof. Narayana Rao, called him on to the dais to conduct proceedings of his lecture on Woman Banking and financial sustenance in villages.

Prof. Mohammed Yonus was a citizen of Indian Union and later Pakistan and later Bangladesh. He was born in 1940. After studies, he worked as a college teacher in United States of America. After bifurcation of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971, India was the first country to recognize Bangladesh as an Independent country. Prof. Yonus was glad to come back to his native place and then serve in his own country. He took his job as professor in a Rural University. The University was built up with beautiful buildings, laboratories, lawns and gardens. He started teaching Economics for university students. Whenever he went outside the campus, he used to see the villagers living in the neighborhood. The rural conditions were very bad with illiteracy and poverty. Once in 1974, the country was struck with famine. The villagers were hardly getting their food. The money that villagers borrowed from village head was turning them as slaves. Prof. Yonus studied this situation very seriously and felt that the poor people must be bailed out from poverty. He felt that the economics he was teaching has no relevance with the rural conditions and the livelihood of poor villagers. He spoke to the

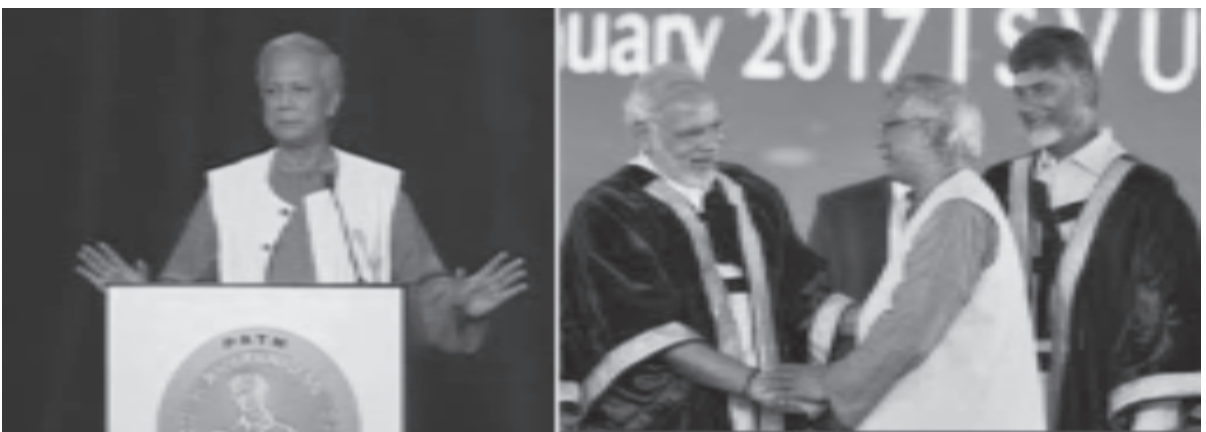
villagers, conducted the village meetings and understood the real crux of the burning problems. Food was related to work and money. As a lecturer of economics, his teachings to the college students shall bear no meaning unless the burning problems in village are mitigated. He invested the money he brought from America and lent some money to four women with instructions to undertake some work on their own and repay the money in reasonable time. Then other women also approached him for taking loan. He offered loan to them also, thus he extended his loaning to forty women and then up to four hundred women in two of nearer villages. Then this activity was spread to other villages. No interest was charged to them. Women were observed to be very sincere in returning the money, even in hard times. Except providing the small amounts of loan (90% were women only), no other laws or rules were dictated to them. People were happy to take loans in few hundreds and thousands at free of interest and then return whenever convenient. Prof. Md. Yonus took this activity as a privileged motion and then approached bank. No bank was ready to give loans without interest or sureties. Banks were giving loan to rich people with interest on collateral security. But Prof. Yonus was giving loans to the poor women folk of the rural areas without interest or security. He requested the Govt. of Bangladesh to start a bank for

helping poverty stricken people, but in vain. Finally, in 1983 he himself started first *Grameen* bank in Bangladesh with own rotated money without imposing bank rules except the trust on village women and self-help women groups. No legal papers were got signed from loanees. No lawyers were engaged by the bank. Return collections were also not bad even in famine or drought or Tsunami times. Conventional banks were owned by rich people and *grameen* banks were owned by poor women groups. Numbers of banks were established in number of villages step by step. As on today there are nine million borrowers having account and two billion dollars' money is rolling on loans. Now the same poor women are happy with surplus money in their hands. Thus, the women empowerment in dealing with financial matters and the concepts of micro credit and micro finance fetched him the highest prestigious noble prize in 2006. Prof. Yonus have received several other national and international honors later. He also received United States presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009 and the congressional gold medal in 2010. The Norwegian noble committee said that "Lasting Peace cannot be achieved unless large population groups find ways in which they can break out of poverty" and that "across cultures and civilization, Yonus and *Grameen* banks have shown even the poorest of the poor can work to bring out their

own development. In 2006, the Norwegian noble committee has announced the award to Prof. Yonus, as peace is inextricably linked up with poverty. Now majority of Bangladesh is living with peace and harmony. Never in the human history such a bold goal has been set and achieved in such a specified time. On the same count after studying the saving activity in Bangladesh, The Govt. of Andhra Pradesh also formed self-help women groups under DWCRA scheme from 1993 and encouraged thrift activity.

Prof. Md. Yonus also set the future objectives to see that all *grameen* children are educated in schools and colleges with scholarships. He emphasized that *grameen* banks or social banks are social business centers without making profits and money must be put for recycling in the society. He said that all educated young men/ women must be entrepreneurs but not job

seekers so that they could offer jobs to others. Youngsters must develop creative thinking to innovate new things in the science. He further said in Bangladesh, the women groups have started water purifying factories, solar energy home systems, yogurt (milk products) factories etc. While concluding his speech, Prof. Yonus emphasized on three zeroes; Zero poverty, zero unemployment and zero pollution in every village and town of the nation for which all young scientists must strive hard to achieve. He also said that only young entrepreneurs can stop the concentrated wealth getting accumulated with few individuals of the country. For the invigorating speech and dynamic instructions of these young old man, aged 76, all the participants on hearing to him were enlightened and gave the standing ovation to this great man.



Noble Laureate Prof. Mohammed Yonus being awarded with gold medal by honorable Prime minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Chandra Babu Naidu present on the inaugural day of 104<sup>th</sup> ISCA meet at Tirupati dated 03-01-2017.

# ORNAMENTAL TREES OF EUCALYPTS

By

**B. M. T. Rajeev**



'Swarming blossoms of red blood or orange colours' adorning a branch of a tree, full tree and crown of a young tree.... planted along city roads attracts the attention of foresters/ horticulturist/ nature lover whoever visits

Melbourne or any city in OZ from elsewhere. This tree spp is one of the popular garden trees that strike for attention of people in summer. Which is this tree? Obviously, I was attracted by this tree while passing through new extensions in Melbourne city in January 2017. It made me to take its photograph, when approached... it was found to be a Eucalyptus spp by the appearance of its leaves & shape in spite of absence of pungent oily smell. An astonishment for any forester, since, Eucalyptus has been branded as a villain in some states of India. After checking with internet, it was found to be Red bloodwood tree.

**Red Bloodwood Tree** (*Corymbia ptychocarpa* which was earlier called as *Eucalyptus ptychocarpa*): **It is a** species widespread from the western Kimberley region of Western Australia east to the Top End of the Northern Territory extending further east to Doomadgee in far north-western Queensland, preferring

habitats around springs, lagoons and along creeks.

Tree grows up to 15 m tall, forming a lignotuber and rhizomes. It has extensive rough brownish fibrous to tessellated bark, a green crown of smooth petiolate

discolours adult leaves -a shade giving evergreen tree.

**Inflorescences:** Flowers are terminal, peduncles angular, scurfy, 1.5–3.8 cm long; buds 7 per umbel, pedicels 1–3.3 cm long. Flower color may be red or shades of pink to creamy white- most attractive to onlookers and to honey bees/ nectar loving birds, and scurfy buds and large cylindrical to barrel-shaped fruit. There are two subspecies distinguished by the degree of ribbing of the buds and fruit. Sub-spp. **Ptychocarpa-** has prominently longitudinally ribbed buds and fruit, Sub-spp.

**Aptycha-**buds and fruit lack prominent longitudinal ribs (but may have longitudinal "lines).

**Flowering Time:** Flowering has been recorded in February,



March, April, May, June and December. It is a popular ornamental tree grown in parks and gardens in northern Australia. But, it is in flowers in January itself in Melbourne

### Other flowering *Eucalyptus* trees:

*Corymbia ficifolia* (*Eucalyptus ficifolia*) – Blood

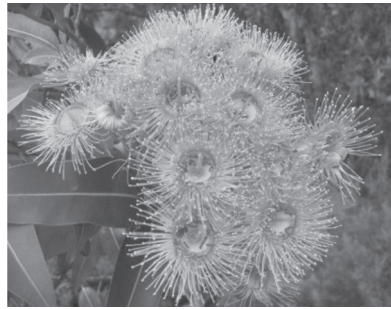


wood tree; one of Western Australia's best, with red, orange, white or pink flowers

and a rounded canopy to 9m tall, thrives in low humidity, however the following Summer Series hybrids have been developed for gardens across to Sydney and up to Brisbane. Grafting has made them tolerant of most soil types and also insures that vigor, color and size grow 'true to type'. It attracts nectar loving insects and birds

*Corymbia* cultivars 'Summer Beauty' Pink Flowers  
*Corymbia* cultivars are small rough barked trees with a broad dome, low crown and wonderful display of flowers during summer.

The flowers do not have any petals, it is the many colored stamen that give the flowers their fluffy appearance. The flower colors include various shades of pink, red and orange. Large urn shaped capsules follow the flowers; these make an attractive addition to a flower arrangement.



Grow in full sun. Will happily grow in coastal areas and once established

will tolerate mild frosts and droughts.

These cultivars are more tolerant of humid conditions and have been successfully grown along East Coast of Australia & some beautiful specimens along the coast of Tasmania.

This lovely garden tree, it doesn't grow too tall and the low crown and spreading canopy make it a lovely shade tree. It is also good at attracting birds.

**Soil:** Well drained sandy to clay loam soil.

**Maintenance:** Keep well-watered and fertilized until it is established.

These cultivars are grafted onto root stock of *Corymbia gummifera* or *Corymbia ptychocarpa* remove any suckers growing from below the graft line. (Bob Saunders.)



***Eucalyptus kingsmillii* ssp. *Alatissima*:** grows up to 8 m tall- garden & avenue tree

**Back ground:** *Eucalyptus* is a diverse genus

of flowering trees and shrubs (including a distinct group with a multiple-stem mallee growth habit) in the myrtle family, Myrtaceae. Members of the genus dominate the tree flora of Australia, and include the tallest known flowering plant on Earth. There are more than 700 species of eucalyptus and most are native to Australia; a very small number are found in adjacent areas of New Guinea and Indonesia. One species, *Eucalyptus deglupta*, ranges as far north as the Philippines. Of the 15 species found outside Australia, just nine are exclusively non-Australian. Species of eucalyptus are cultivated widely in the tropical and temperate world, including the Americas, Europe, Africa, the Mediterranean Basin, the Middle East, China, and the Indian subcontinent. However, the range over which many eucalypts can be planted in the temperate zone is constrained by their limited cold tolerance.

**Eucalyptus** is one of three similar genera that are commonly referred to as "Eucalypts", the others being **Corymbia** and **Angophora**. Many species, though by no means all, are known as **gum trees** because they exude copious kino from any break in the bark (e.g., scribbly gum).

To meet growing demand for wood in construction industry the Eucalyptus was introduced all over the world in 1960s. India is also one of the countries which took it up in large scale plantations. Now, Eucalyptus has earned the wrath of the people against it because of its inability to prove as a timber when young and the controversy in its character of drying up the moisture contents of soil in its habitat. It has reached the stage of facing ban of its cultivation even in private lands e.g. Karnataka State.

In Australia, Eucalyptus is seen everywhere along with Acacia spp. It is widely planted in

towns and along high ways and in borders of big agricultural plots. Banks of creeks, streams and rivers and wood lots between the cultivated lands, zoos and city wood lots are with eucalyptus trees (As seen in Australia, part of Northern territory & Victoria states; Author) contrary to the myth in India.

**Eucalyptus wood** is used in building construction extensively after chemical treatment along with pines wood. Furniture and wooden floors are pure Eucalyptus which cannot be distinguished and treated as paiah wood as in India. Wood chips after chemical treatment is widely used as 'mulching material' to a thickness of one foot in gardening-parks, houses and in road side plantations to mulch around the plants to conserve moisture during summer, avoid frost bite during winters and also to guard against weeds/ hardening of base of plants. It costs 50 AU\$ per bag of 50 kgs. i.e. each Kg costs Rs 50. All houses are wood fabricated hipped roofs of tiles or sheets with half brick thick wire cut bricks wall all round with pointing and rarely with plastering/ painting; inside-plywood box with false ceiling finish to perfection & taste. Life expectancy of houses is 50 years and more. Period of construction of a house of 30 squares is 6 months (The construction of residential houses is similar to US as I have seen in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Buffalo etc. Author). No RCC buildings seen except in multistoried commercial establishments in Central Business District (CBD). Smoke is seldom in the houses; even lighting of camphor attracts fire alarm. Living in these houses is like living in the forest rest houses of 1910s in India (Karnataka).

**Urban planting:** Urban tree planting is ubiquitous to keep the cities green and cool. It

has gained importance with the participation of more than 100 nations in celebrating the 'World Environment Day' on 5<sup>th</sup> June from 1974. It has added attraction with celebration of *Vana Mahotsava* in India in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of June, every year since, 1950. Many tree species of native origin and flowering exotics are being planted along the roads in urban areas. It is an annual affair in India. Many cities have separate wing of forestry personnel to fulfill the task. eg Bengaluru city. In many towns the Forest department does the job and in others, the Horticulture Department under Municipal Corporations or government is at it.

Varieties of trees have are planted in urban areas like ornamental (flowering), shade giving evergreen, fruiting trees to attract birds and some timber trees also preferred eg. Mahogani in Bengaluru & huge tree spp are avoided. But rarely, Eucalyptus is planted in cities because of their vertical growth, not bearing attractive flowers/ shade or fruits to birds. But, the ornamental and attractive Eucalyptus tree planted in the city roads of Melbourne OZ.-**Red bloodwood** tree appears to be fulfilling the requirement of a tree fir for planting along urban roads. It is a tree suitable to adore the parks/ roads of cities like- Bengaluru, Ooty, Pune, Delhi, Dehra Dun, Chandigarh, Vizag, and Hyderabad etc. to begin with.

**The technique of urban tree planting in Melbourne** is as follows.

1. Tall saplings are planted in the pit as we do and the tree guard is very simple -3 reapers dipped in tar is planted in triangle at 50 cm radius and the plant is tied at 3 points from the reapers with tarred plastic cloth belt. It acts as psychological tree guard and also as wind guard and make the plant to grow straight. The base is



mulched with chemically treated & tarred wood chips and watered. Even a plastic pot-like ring is given at the base of plant to facilitate for watering.

2. The plants are trained and made to go straight for 2 or 3 or 4 m depending on the spp. and made to branch. The branches are systematically pruned by saw without injuring the tree.

3. In the CBD very costly tree guards made out of aluminium is seen, to ensure that the

plant of preferred tree spp. comes up successfully.

**Conclusion:** The colorful blossoms photographs of this Red bloodwood tree-were put in whats app blogs; it went viral among friends... the interest shown from forestry fraternity is wonderful.



# “A WOLF PACK ON THE MOVE :



- The first 3 are the old or sick, they give the direction and pace to the entire pack. If it was the other way round, they would be left behind, losing contact with the pack. In case of an ambush they would be sacrificed.

- Then come 5 strong ones, the front line.
- In the center are the rest of the pack members.
- Then the 5 strongest following.
- Last is alone, the Alpha.

He controls everything from the rear. In that position he can see everything, decide the direction. He sees all of the pack.

The pack moves according to the Elders' pace and help each other, watch each other.

*Again I am left speechless by nature ... I knew that wolves are different, but didn't realize how much we could learn from them...*

*I didn't know wolves put the elders of the pack FIRST .... a lot of people on this planet should take note... they are to be seen up front, setting the pace and direction while enjoying the protection of the rest... and not invisible at the back of the line."*

Unknown author

# MY EXPERIENCE IN KARULAI RESERVE FOREST

By  
**Somasundaram. V.S**

The news came in the dailies that about 40 members of unsocial elements group are camping in the Reserve Forests of Karulai Range and the police, encountered with arms these unsocial elements group and two among them were killed. When I read this news, I wondered how this happened in the Reserve Forests? .This prompted me to write this article

I worked in Karulai Forest Range for four years continuously as Range Officer in Nilambur Forest Division. Karulai is a small village with one High School, and some Shops. The Range Officers Quarters and Office are situated on a small hillock near the shops on the right side of the road going up to Nedungayam and maintained by the Forest Department.

Karulai Forest Range had many specialties when compared to other Ranges. This was only Range having phone Connection at that time and Roll call of the subordinates at the Range Office on every day was done. There were staff quarters also near the Range Office. Before Independence British were the Range Officers here. Because they wanted help from the local people, they recruited the locals as foresters and forest guards. It was said the British Range Officers traveled on

the horses, maintained by the department for the inspection of the Forests. The subordinates were supplied uniforms and were feared of the British Range Officer. I heard a story that a Forester one morning at the time of Role call covered all the uniforms supplied to him in a paper and kept in the office at the time of Roll call of the Subordinates, and ran away due to the fear of the British Range Officer and he never turned back.

From the H. Q. of the Range Officer up to Nedungayam Bridge ie.3 K.M one had to walk. The Karulai Reserve Forest starts from Nedungayam. No Forest Station or resting facility was available except a Rest House constructed by the British. As usual the Range was divided into sections under the charge of Foresters and the sections were divided into beats under the charge of Beat Guards and watchers. The extent of each was about 10000 to 12000 Acres of Forests. The primary responsibility of the Beat Guard is to detect the offences as and when occur. The Guards were helped by the local tribe's.

According to Indian Forest Act and Kerala Forest Act powers were given to Forest Officers to

prevent trespasses and arrest the trespassers without warrant and Investigate the Forest Offences. The Forest Officers have the powers of Police Officers also. Even though all the powers were there I wonder how 40 members entered in the deep Forests, cleared the site, put shed for their stay with Solar facilities etc. A Forest Station building is now there with Forest staff. It could be presumed either the staff of Forest is afraid of them or they are not patrolling in the Forests regularly.

When I was working as Range Officer I received the news of some illicit felling of bamboos in the boarder of Karulai Range. To reach the site we have only to walk. A fair weather road of 12 Kms. was available and we travelled in a jeep. The jeep in which we were travelling could be taken up to the end of the metal road that is a place known as Manjery, A temporary shed put up by the Minor Forest Produce (MFP) contractor was there. From here, semi evergreen and moist evergreen Forest starts.

The Driver of the Jeep was given instructions to wait for us. As we started very early in the morning, we could not take anything for our mid-day meal. We collected a small aluminum pot, two or three ceramic plates and some rice from here. We had to cross 3 rivers. I had been there once or twice earlier also for preparing estimate for old Rest House at a place called Meenmutty, constructed by the British Officers

for watching the wild life and the forests. The Rest House was constructed on stone pillars of 4 metre height from the floor with wooden ladder to climb up and safely take shelter in the wooden compartment with tin sheet roofing above. But the ladder to climb up was destroyed by wild elephants, since no Officers after Britishers camped there. Soon after I took charge of Karulai Range, Chief Conservator, Sri. K. K. Nair informed me that he want to stay in this guest house during his next visit. I visited few times this area in this connection only.

Only the tribe called, *Chola Naikens* were the human beings seen in this area, but they were afraid of civilized men. Whenever they happened to see other than their people, they ran and hide in the Forest as wild animals did. So their help to show us a way to the boarder was ruled out and without any help, we proceeded towards the boarder of the Forests, where illicit felling of bamboos took place.

Without knowing the correct spot we walked and walked and at the Sunset we reached under a big rock, about 8000 MSL with three peaks like *Thrissule* known as Mukkurthi Peak. These peaks could be seen even from the nearest Town about 15 to 20 K away. We were all very much tired and restricted our further walking. We sat under the rock and put fire around us to escape the attack from wild animals. We were also very hungry so we prepared our food with

rice we brought and ate.

We had spent the night there itself, but nobody could sleep due to heat of fire put by us and cold winds. We got up early in the morning as soon as the sun started rising.

Returning to Karulai through that terrain through ever green Forests without any foot mark or so, was out of question. We searched all-round and we found an estate in Tamilnadu side, The Estate was far below from our position. The only alternate was to reach to that Estate. But the estate could be reached crossing gullies and thick ever green Forest. Anyhow we reached the estate at about 3 O, clock in the evening. A small tea shop for providing eatables to the laborers of the estate was found there. We were all very hungry, but none of us had sufficient money. By searching our pockets we could collect few coins and purchased few eatables from the shop and on our request a Taxi Car for our journey to Karulai had been arranged by the Shop keeper, on the condition that the taxi fare will be paid only after reaching Karulai, and next day very late in the evening we reached Karulai. This I am writing to show how the Forest Staff

worked in the Forest in those days without any facilities as to-day. The majority of the Forest Staff were hard working and detected many offences, with sporting spirit as and when noticed at the beginning itself.

Everything had changed. Now there is a Forest Station at Paduka Section. Formerly in Paduka Section only wild elephant capturing was the Forest operation carried out. This work was done from January to March every year till it was stopped by the Govt. Pits of measurements of 12 feet deep with diameter of 9 feet at bottom and 12 feet at the top were dug and covered the top of the pit with bamboo and leaves. No other regular works were carried out here. Since no other Forestry operations were carried out, the Section staff' had only perambulation in the forest areas. They did their work sincerely and perfectly.

It was reported that unsocial elements entered in this part of the Forests and cleared the area, put shed for their stay with Solar system and cooked meals. The only possibility for this is either due to the negligence of the staff or fear.

*Do not lower your goals to the level of your abilities. Instead raise your abilities to the height of your goals.*

*You see a person's true colors when you are no longer beneficial to their life.*

# MIGRATION OF ELEPHANTS IN ANDHRA PRADESH

By  
**A. Parthasarthi**

The elephant made its appearance in Andhra Pradesh after nearly a century gap. In the year 1985 a group of 15 elephants migrated from Tamil Nadu to Kuppam forests in Andhra Pradesh and made its abode in the state. Subsequently further batches of elephants from Tamil Nadu joined this group swelling the population to 35.

The late Smt. Indira Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India while addressing the Central Board of Forestry Conference in 1982 at New Delhi, remarked that there are redundant acts in India and as an example quoted the existence of Elephant Preservation Act, 1879 of Andhra Pradesh, with no elephants in the state. The arrival of elephants in Andhra Pradesh was welcomed and was keenly watched and monitored by the department. To afford protection to the elephants an area of 358 sq. km was notified as Kaundinya Wildlife Sanctuary. This was subsequently complemented by notification of the adjoining forest area of 766 sq km as Rayala elephant reserve.

The forests of Kuppam constitute mainly of dry

thorny scrub jungle with patches of dry deciduous forests in the valley portion. The vegetation comprised predominantly of *Acacia amara* with stunted growth of *Anogeisus latifolia*, *Chloroxylon swietenia*, *ficus* species etc. The forests in Andhra Pradesh are contiguous to the forests of Pernambut, Gudiyatham and Ambur areas of Tamil Nadu. The Mordhana forest block of Tamil Nadu borders the Kangundhi block in Andhra Pradesh. The elephants were never comfortable in this forest habitat and were restless exploring the areas adjacent to the forest resulting in severe man animal conflict. The restless elephants meanwhile moved up and down the forests of Chittoor district and in their wanderings even crossed the busy Chennai – Bangalore National Highway at a point where the culvert was high and wide. In their pursuit for better habitat they moved up North- East towards the forests of Tirumala, a larger compact forest habitat covering 2000 sq km of contiguous forests with bamboo patches and undulating terrain with

perennial water sources.

In the year 1993 a few adult elephants numbering three individuals in two batches, commenced the journey from Kuppam, bordering Tamil Nadu-Andhra Pradesh state and moved North East beyond Avullapali- Marella block and entered Talakona block the southern tip of Tirumala forests. In the process of migration over a distance of 150 kms. the animals covered the discontinuous patches of forests traversing through the natural existing corridor of revenue hillocks. None witnessed the actual migration but through the footprints left by the animals, their tracks retraced and confirmed. Of the three initial scout elephants one retraced and returned to the herd at Kuppam forests and the other two were captured near Avachari Kona at Tirumala, handed over to S V Zoological Park, Tirupati, and later named as Jaya and Vijaya. Within a few months a group of 15 elephants migrated to the Tirumala forests and made it their permanent abode. This was complemented by the addition of some more animals and finally raising it to the present number of 33 elephants in Tirumala (Seshachalam) forests comprising of adults and calves.

The mistaken identity of wild elephants to be domesticated ones by the villagers of the forest

fringe and people in the migratory path, made the people get very close to the pachyderms raising a conflict among them. A number of human casualties ensued, pitting them against the animals. The forest department in its endeavor educated these people in keeping a safe distance and communicating to the officials of the animal movement. In all 26 elephants were found dead, 12 within the RF and 14 outside, since their re-entry in Andhra Pradesh. The census further states that 16 were electrocuted while the rest were natural deaths. Human casualties accounted for is 49 since 1985-86. The education by the department to the related public saw a drastic dwindling in number of deaths among the humans being only 7, from the year 1999 till now.

The French traveller Jean-Baptiste Tavernier a gem merchant had recorded the "pit method of capture" of elephants by Mir Jumal an army person in Cuddapah forests, in the year 1638-43 and now elephants have repopulated the same forests after a gap of 400 yrs. This is a very interesting happening and MoEFCC GOI regards this group of elephant population as relic population and is covered under Project Elephant- Govt. of India initiative.

## NEWS AND NOTES

**Lioness Grishma dies at Etawah Safari:** - In a setback to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav's dream project, a lioness that was ill and died at the Lion Safari in Etawah, which has seen eight other big cats perish since 2014. "Lioness Grishma was brought to the Lion Safari on September 14, 2014 from Gujarat. She was ill since July 3 and died today," Director, Lion Safari, Sanjay Srivastav said.

The Lion Safari has seen three adult lionesses, Grishma, Lakshmi and Tapasya, and a lion, along with five tiger cubs perish since 2014. The safari now has three lions and three lionesses.

**The 'Pangolin Men' Saving The World's Most Trafficked Mammal:** - Incredible portraits of a group of men who dedicate their lives to the most trafficked mammal in the world - the pangolin - have been released today as part of a campaign to raise awareness and funds for the protection of the species. Committed minders from the The Tikki Hywood Trust in Zimbabwe work hard to protect the species with a one-on-one care programme. The charity workers are assigned with one pangolin each, where they spend 24 hours a day rehabilitating and walking the majestic mammals so that they can forage naturally.

**Vijayawada: Temple beggar donates silver crown worth Rs. 1.5 lakh to Lord Ram:** - Meet Yadireddy, a beggar from Andhra capital city Vijayawada, who donated a silver crown to Lord Ram. At a time when many across the country are facing a severe cash crunch, the offering made by the beggar to Lord Ram came as a surprise for many. 75 year old Yadireddy hailing from Nalgonda

district of Telangana had come to Vijayawada as teenager. During his life's journey for livelihood he did many odd jobs and drove a rickshaw for almost forty five years. But for past few years, as he turned old, he started begging on the city streets. He actually realized soon that he was earning more than what he needs and since he has no family, Yadireddy decided to spend his extra earnings on spiritual work.

"I believe in god and I have only survived till now due to the strength and courage he has given me. As a thank you, I am offering my bit to Lord Rama," said Yadireddy.

"He was begging for many years in the temple premises and now performed a great gesture by decided to offering this to God. Yadireddy has become an inspiration to many as he has sent a message that money is materialistic and hence doesn't matter while good deeds are heavenly "said Temple Chairman

Yadireddy had earlier donated silver crowns to Sai Baba as well and now he has chosen to donate silver crowns for Kodanda Ramalayam in Mutyalampadu. He spent nearly Rs. 150,000/- for silver crowns while he also donated Rs. 20 Thousand for Nitya- Annadanam. (Pl. see last cover page for photo)

**Here's why An Extra Second Was Added To Indian Time:** - NEW DELHI: A 'leap second' was added to the Indian clock at 5:29.59 hours today to synchronize with the Earth's rotational clock. As the atomic clock at the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) in New Delhi struck 23:59:59 last night, it was programmed to add an extra second to 2017 to compensate for a slowdown in the Earth's rotation.

Adding a second barely has an impact on the daily life, but it does matter in the fields of satellite navigation, astronomy and communication.

"The Earth and rotation around its own axis is not regular, as sometimes it speeds up and sometimes it slows down, due to various factors including earthquakes and moon's gravitational forces that often results in ocean tides. As a result, astronomical time (UT1) gradually falls out of sync with atomic time (UTC), and as and when the difference between UTC and UT1 approaches 0.9 seconds, a leap second is added to UTC through atomic clocks worldwide," D K Aswal, Director NPL said.

Adding the leap second to the Indian clock is done by the NPL under the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). The NPL, one of the oldest laboratories in the country, has five atomic clocks and nearly 300 such pieces exist across the globe.

Atomic clocks are so precise that the margin of error in its functioning is just of a second in 100 million years.

To be in sync with the Indian Standard Time (IST) and the Earth's rotational clock, the Indian clock needs to be adjusted after the insertion of a leap second.

DK Aswal said the Indian atomic clock was also synchronized with the atomic clock of International Bureau of Weight and Measure (BIPM), France.

"The leap second adjustment is not so relevant for normal everyday life. However, this shift is critical for applications requiring of time accuracies in the nanosecond, which are critical in the fields of astronomy, satellite navigation, communication networks," DK Aswal added.

Those utilizing CSIR-NPL time dissemination services need not worry as they will receive the corrected time post the insertion of the leap second, DK Aswal said.

Since 1972, 36 leap seconds have been added at intervals varying from six months to seven years and this will be 37th year.

### **China extends orange alert as thick smog chokes Beijing:** -

Chinese capital on Monday extended the orange alert for heavy air pollution for another three days as toxic smog continued to choke Beijing in the New Year, forcing authorities to cancel hundreds of flights in the neighboring Tianjin city. The orange alert, the second highest after red —which was originally effective from Friday to yesterday — will not be lifted until Wednesday midnight, a statement issued by the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau said.

There is criticism as to why Beijing has not declared a red alert in the last a few days despite heavy pollution levels that have reached hazardous levels in the last couple of days.

The Bureau said Air quality will improve on Monday because of weak cold air, but will return to the medium or heavy air pollution level tomorrow and on Wednesday.

Under the emergency plan, heavy polluting gasoline-fueled vehicles and trucks carrying construction garbage are banned from roads. Some manufacturing firms are required to cut production.

### **Four tier alert**

Beijing has a four-tier alert system for pollution, with red being the highest followed by orange, yellow and blue. The orange alert means the air quality index is forecast to exceed 200 for three consecutive days.

Meanwhile, the neighboring Tianjin city cancelled hundreds of flights because of the heavy smog that limited visibility on Sunday.

The municipal government issued the orange alert for smog and haze on Saturday night.

An orange alert means heavy pollution — PM2.5 higher than 150 — for three consecutive days.

A total of 309 flights have been cancelled, 15 forced to land in other airports and one returned, Xinhua reported.

Emergency plans have been activated to take care of the stranded passengers.

All highways in the city have also been closed, the city's transport authorities said yesterday. Local weather bureau forecast the ongoing smog will continue till January 5 when a cold haze will disperse the pollution.

Tianjin is a frequent victim of smog that is common in the winter in north China where cold weather and burning of the dirty coal for heating combine to exacerbate the situation.

**Not a year for tigers:** - In 2016, 33 big cats died in Madhya Pradesh due to poaching, territorial clashes besides natural reasons. Once a home to tigers, Madhya Pradesh now appears to have turned into an enemy territory for them, as the state witnessed the highest number of feline deaths in 2016, when it lost 33 big cats.

From 2011 to 2016, as many as 89 tigers died in the state due to various reasons including poaching, territorial clashes or natural reasons as cited in the data obtained from the MP Forest Department. The data revealed that 2012 witnessed the death of 16 felines which reduced to 11 in 2013. Subsequent years proved more fatal for the wildcat when the state saw 14 and 15 deaths in 2014 and 2015 respectively. And, then came 2016, the worst of all when the figures

were almost double the average of the previous five years. On an average, 14 tigers died every year from 2012 to 2015, but the toll went up to an alarming level of 33 in 2016.

As far as reasons are concerned, the death of 30 out of 89 tigers was attributed to territorial clashes, while 22 of them fell prey to poachers. The remaining 37 tigers died either due to old age, illness or some other reason.

Amid all these dismal reports, state forest authorities claimed that there was some encouraging news too. The state has recorded a growth in tiger population as more cubs were born during this period.

"The tiger population was reduced to 257, according to the census carried out by the NTCA in 2011. However in 2014, their numbers had gone up to 308," MP's Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, Wildlife, Jitendra Agrawal said.

Tiger conservationists, however, find the rise in deaths as negligence on the part of the authorities.

"A task force constituted in 2005 by the Centre had recommended that the responsibility should be fixed in each case of unnatural death. But this is not being done in the state," a Bhopal-based tiger conservationist Ajay Dubey said.

"The poor network and intelligence sharing are also making tigers more vulnerable," Dubey lamented.

**One percent of Indians own 58% of country's wealth: Oxfam inequality report:**

₌ Fifty-seven billionaires in India possess as much wealth as the poorest 70% of the country, according to a report on global inequality released on Monday by Oxfam, an international confederation of 18 non-governmental organizations.

By comparison, eight men across the world are as wealthy as the poorest 50% of the global population, the report said. A mere 500 people will bequeath wealth worth \$2.1 trillion – more than the current gross domestic product of India – to their heirs over the next 20 years.

Drawing from news reports and its own studies, the Oxfam paper points to growing gaps in income inequality across the world. In India, for instance, the chief executive officer of a leading information technology company earns 416 times more than the firm's average employee. This is reflected in India's wealth distribution. The richest 10% in India own 80% of its wealth, while the richest 1% possesses 58% of all wealth.

Even income growth has been uneven over the years. Between 1988 and 2011, incomes of the poorest 10% of Indians rose by \$29, or around Rs. 2,000, at an increase of 1% each year. For the richest 10% in the same period, incomes increased by almost Rs. 40,000, with an annual increase of 25%.

Oxfam lists several reasons for this inequality, including crony capitalism and corporations that squeeze employees at lower rungs to maximize salaries and dividends for high-level executives and shareholders. This gets exacerbated in the current economic framework, Oxfam argues, since the surest way to grow wealth is to possess it. Those who are most rich can afford the best investment advice. Despite this growth of wealth, governments across the world lose taxes and valuable income with the super-rich depositing their wealth in tax havens abroad and manipulating political systems to do so without repercussion.

Oxfam's report comes a week after HSBC

released a study on social sector spending in India on January 10. The report, timed between demonetization and the budget, notes that India's expenditure on social sectors such as health and education is far lower than global and emerging market standards. However, this expenditure has far greater impact on growth than capital expenditure on infrastructure.

Governments tend to ignore such expenditure, the report argues, because their political terms last five years, whereas it takes around six years for the clear benefits of social expenditure to show.

### **Why some can people wiggle their ears, but not others:**

- People cannot swivel their ears to point at a sound source, while many animals, like cats and dogs, can do so with ease. Humans do have weak vestigial muscles attached to the shell of the ear, called the auricle or pinna, as well as evidence of a vestigial nervous system, which could have functioned to orient the ears. Some people can control their auricular muscles to move the ear slightly but to a noticeable extent, an ability that seems to have a genetic basis. A 2015 study found indications that the system could have been adapted to respond to sounds. For example, shifting the eyes from side to side produces weak electrical activity in ear muscles and a minuscule curling of the outer edge of the ear, and a sudden noise behind one ear elicits weak electrical activity in the muscles behind that ear.

Some people can reportedly improve their ear wiggling by concentration and practice, but they have to have the ability to begin with.

**WORLD FIRST - Lonely leopard shark learns to reproduce without a mate:** - Leonie the

leopard shark has made a switch that could save her species -becoming the first shark recorded to change from sexual to asexual reproduction, researchers have found.

Christine Dudgeon of University of Queensland in Australia said sharks could reproduce without a mating partner, but none with a recorded sexual mating history had ever made the change to asexual reproduction.

She documented the change at Reef HQ Aquarium in Australia. "Leonie had pups with a male leopard shark until 2013, when the breeding pair were separated for space reasons," said Dudgeon.

"In April 2016 Leonie hatched three eggs, despite having no access to a mating partner for three mating seasons," she said.

"We thought she could be storing sperm but when we tested the pups and the possible parent sharks using DNA fingerprinting, we found they only had cells from Leonie" she added. It is a much-needed breakthrough and coincides with release of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species which identified the leopard shark as an endangered species.

"This has big implications for conservation and shows us how flexible the shark's reproductive system really is," said Dudgeon.

"Leonie adapted to her circumstances and we believe she switched because she lost her mate. What we want to know now is could this occur in the wild and, if so, how often does it?," she said. The study was published in the journal Scientific Reports.

**2016 Recorded as Warmest Year Globally Since 1880, Says NASA:** A separate analysis by NASA found that 2016 was the hottest on record.

Last year, the Earth sweltered under the hottest temperatures in modern times for the third year in a row, US scientists said Wednesday, raising new concerns about the quickening pace of climate change.

Temperatures spiked to new national highs in parts of India, Kuwait and Iran, while sea ice melted faster than ever in the fragile Arctic, said the report by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Taking a global average of the land and sea surface temperatures for the entire year, NOAA found the data for "2016 was the highest since record keeping began in 1880," said the announcement.

A separate analysis by the US space agency NASA also found that 2016 was the hottest on record.

The global average temperature last year was 1.69 Fahrenheit (0.94 Celsius) above the 20th century average, and 0.07 degrees F (0.04 C) warmer than in 2015, the last record-setting year.

Each of the first eight months of the year "had record high temperatures for their respective months," NOAA said.

The main reason for the rise is the burning of fossil fuels like oil and gas, which send carbon dioxide, methane and other pollutants known as greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere and warm the planet.

The mounting toll of industrialization on the Earth's natural balance is increasingly apparent in the record books.

"Since the start of the 21st century, the annual global temperature record has been broken five times (2005, 2010, 2014, 2015 and 2016)," said NOAA.

Another factor has been the Pacific Ocean warming trend of El Nino, which experts say exacerbates the planet's already rising warmth. El Nino comes and goes. The latest episode became particularly strong in 2015, and subsided about halfway through 2016.

But El Nino was responsible for just a small fraction of last year's warmth, according to Peter Stott, acting director of Britain's Met Office Hadley Center.

"The main contributor to warming over the last 150 years is human influence on climate from increasing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere," he said.

Piers Forster, director of the Priestley International Center for Climate at the University of Leeds, agreed.

"Even if you remove the extra warming due to El Nino, 2016 was the warmest year ever recorded," Forster said.

"2017 will likely be cooler. However, unless we have a major volcanic eruption, I expect the record to be broken again within a few years."

All of North America was the warmest since records began in 1910, breaking that region's last record set in 1998.

Europe and Asia each saw their third hottest years on record, while Australia marked its fourth warmest year since records began more than a century ago.

Unusual spikes in temperature were seen in Phalodi, India, which reached 124 F (51 C) on May 19 — marking India's hottest temperature ever. Dehloran, Iran hit 127 F (53 C) on July 22, a new national record.

Meanwhile, Mitribah, Kuwait hit an all-time high

of 129 F (54 C) on July 21, which may be the highest temperature ever recorded in all of Asia, NOAA said.

Planet-wide, the heat led to more melting at the poles. In the Arctic, average annual sea ice extent was approximately 3.92 million square miles (10.2 million square kilometers), the smallest annual average in the record, NOAA said.

"In the Antarctic, annual Antarctic sea ice extent was the second smallest on record, behind 1986, at 4.31 million square miles," it said.

"Both the November and December 2016 extents were record small."

Unusually hot years wreak havoc on the planet by increasing heavy rainfall in some parts of the world while leading to drought in others, damaging crops.

Fish and birds must migrate farther than ever to find suitable temperatures.

Diseases can spread faster in the warming oceans, sickening marine life and killing corals. Glaciers and polar ice caps melt, leading to sea level rise that will eventually swallow many of the globe's coastal communities, home to some one billion people.

Experts say the only solution is to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, in favor of Earth-friendly renewable energy such as wind and solar.

"Climate change is one of the great challenges of the twenty first century and shows no signs of slowing down," said Mark Maslin, professor of climatology at University College London. "The

de carbonization of the global economy is the ultimate goal to prevent the worst effects of climate change.”

**Forest dept. kills 'Queen of Kabini' with overdose of tranquilizer:** Mysuru: The tigress that majestically held the title of being the 'Queen of Kabini backwaters' died on Monday night due to negligence of the forest officials. It is alleged that the tigress died due to overdose of tranquilizer during an operation to capture her in H D Kote taluk.

The forest officials had received the information that a nine-year-old tigress had ventured into a plantation of one Ramesh at Gundathur forest area and ate away a calf. Since the tigress remained in the plantation, the forest officials rushed to the spot and tried to capture the tigress. At about 5 pm, when the forest officials started their operation, the tigress escaped into the forest. Within one hour, the forest officials tracked her down and shot first dose of tranquilizer. At about 7 pm, the tiger fell unconscious and then the forest officials tried to lift her up and place her on a net. This is when the tigress again got up on her feet and tried to escape. Sensing trouble, forest staffers shot another dose of tranquilizer. After one hour the tigress collapsed in the forest. However, it is said that since the forest officials delayed administration of a medication that should have followed the tranquilizer, the tigress died at about 10 pm.

The locals have been raged by the death of the tigress and they are now seen blaming the forest officials for the death. They claim that despite

the information about the tigress entering the plantation having been passed to the department in the morning, they got into action mode only at 5 pm. It may be recalled that on January 12, an eight-year-old tiger died after being captured by the forest officials in Bandipur area. It is said that even this tiger had an overdose of tranquilizer.

All in all, due to unscientific operations of the forest department has killed the Majestic Queen of Kabini who was enthralling the tourists for nearly a decade.

**Concerns over first snow and common leopards found in same area:** - They are worried about the future of the snow leopard's habitat if common leopards begin to live at higher elevations in a warming climate. The issue will be high on the agenda of an international meeting involving 12 snow leopard range countries starting in Nepal on Tuesday, 17 January.

Wildlife experts say this is the first pictorial evidence of the two cats at the same place. The snow leopard is an endangered species.

This has made researchers think that the animal was not simply visiting the area but was actually living there.

**Under threat;** Snow leopards live at an altitude above 3,000m in typically open and rocky areas. Common leopards' habitats include forests and woodlands at lower elevations. Snow leopards are sparsely distributed across 12 countries - Mongolia and the Himalayan ranges in China, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bhutan, as well as in the five Central Asian states. There

are an estimated 3,500 to 7,000 snow leopards in the wild and they have been listed as endangered mainly because of poaching and habitat loss. Scientists say the lower reaches of snow leopard's habitats and the upper limits of common leopards' territories have always overlapped in the Himalayas and other high mountains in Asia. But, they add, climate change could make that more complicated.

"In a changing climate, we expect the tree line to move up the slopes and that's encroaching into the snow leopard's habitat," said Byron Weckworth, China programme director with Panthera, a conservation organization dedicated to preserving wild cats.

Some studies have shown that the upper forest tree line is already being pushed higher.

They suggest that between 30% and 50% of the current snow leopard habitat in the Himalayas will be lost because of the shifting tree line and the shrinking of the alpine zone. "The bigger threat is the snow leopards' habitat loss and its fragmentation," said Mr. Weckworth, whose organization has partnered with the Snow Leopard Trust and Chinese conservation organization Shan Shui to monitor wildlife in China's Sanjiangyuan nature reserve. Prof Sandro Lovari, from the University of Siena in Italy, was not involved in this research but has conducted separate studies on snow leopards.

He agrees with the loss of habitat projections. "Snow leopards could be squeezed between the barren land of the higher parts of the mountain and the upward moving tree line," he said. Wen Cheng from Shan Shui says the availability of food will be key. "The possibility for co-existence or conflict highly depends on the abundance and diversity of wild prey," he said.

Prof Lovari's team conducted a study on snow

leopards in the Sagarmatha National park in Nepal's Everest region in 2013. They found that the common leopard had greater habitat adaptability.

"This behavior could enhance the [common leopard's] takeover of the snow leopard's habitat as it's the larger, more ecologically flexible species," Prof Lovari explained. In Nepal's Annapurna and Kanchanjunga conservation areas too, common leopards have been recently found in altitudes that normally have been the territories of snow leopards.

Koustubh Sharma, an expert with the Snow Leopard Trust, said: "How are these two cat species already managing to live together - or will the interface being difficult when their habitats are changing with climate change?"

"The pictures from our camera trap make these questions more relevant and pressing."

While some conservationists fear that there might be conflicts between the two leopard species for habitat and prey, others think the two already co-exist in places where their territories overlap.

two species could even mate.

"The common leopards there are paler in color and that may have sparked that kind of perception among locals. But from a biological point of view, it's extremely unlikely that they can hybridize," Mr. Weckworth of the Panthera organization added.

During his field study in Nepal's Sagarmatha National Park, Prof Lovari said he found male snow leopards coming down to the edge of the forested land during the mating period.

"But there is no information whatsoever on the hybridization between common and snow leopards," he said.

"It would be very unlikely - even more unlikely than brown bears and polar bears."

# Birth Day Greetings

*We wish the following born on the dates mentioned*  
*“ A very Happy Birth Day ”*

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Name of the member</b>	<b>D.O.B.</b>			
	Sarva Sri		9.	P.Ramulu	14-02-1963
			10.	Ch.Suryanarayana	15-02-1966
1.	B.Chandramouli	08-02-1944	11.	Ms.J.Vasanth	23-02-1980
2.	M.G.Purushotham Naidu	10-02-1932	12.	V. Krishna	25-02-1966
3.	P.Bhushanam	10-02-1947	13.	N.Kondala Rao	02-03-1961
4.	K.Rajasekhar	12-02-1936	14.	Y.Narasimha Rao	02-03-1962
5.	Mohd. Thayyab	16-02-1956	15.	V.Saibaba	04-03-1980
6.	Sultan Mohiuddin	17-02-1942	16.	K.Vinod Kumar	05-03-1979
7.	Sharda Prasad	20-02-1966			
8.	A.Kishan	21-02-1952			
9.	A.V.Ramakrishna Rao	23-02-1935			
10.	P.Rajender Reddy	27-02-1956			
11.	L.Krishna Bhoopal Rao	03-02-1942			
12.	V.V.Rajam	03-02-1945			
13.	M. Anjaneyulu	01-03-1954			

**Secretary**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Name of Serving Officers</b>	<b>D.O.B.</b>
	Sarva Sri	
1.	P.K.Sarangi	06-02-1959
2.	VSNV Prasad	10-02-1979
3.	.Smt.R.Shobha	11-02-1962
4.	Chiranjeevi Chowdhary	16-02-1965
5.	Anil Kumar Mourya	21-02-1960
6.	Smt.A.Soni Bala Devi	01-03-1974
7.	Sanjay Gupta	05-03-1962
8.	Smt.P.Shyamala	12-02-1980



## LEGAL NOTES

### The Conservator of Forests vs. T.M. Sukumaran

The Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle, filed W.P. No. 1744 of 2008 under Art. 227 of the Constitution of India, challenging the judgment dated 20.03.2007 of Additional District Judge, Pathanamthitta, whereby the confiscation order of a mini-lorry involved in a case of illegal transport of timber, was set aside.

T.M. Sukumaran is the owner of the mini-lorry. It was found by the Deputy Range Officer during night patrolling on 19.05.2004 that the owner of the lorry at the wheel and others sitting in the cabin were illegally transporting anjili (wild jack-*Artocarpus hirsuta*) logs and planks in the vehicle. The lorry, and the logs and planks were seized. The investigation revealed that the accused were transporting timber from an area which was allotted by a Government grant to the respondent as, "Food Production Area". According to the terms of the grant, the Government retained the right over the anjili trees in the land and there is a ban on felling the anjili trees. After serving a show-cause-notice on the owner of the lorry and holding enquiry, the Authorized Officer passed order confiscating the vehicle.

A review petition by the owner of the vehicle before the Conservator of Forests was dismissed. Against these orders, the owner of the vehicle filed appeal before the District Court, Pathanamthitta. During the hearing of the appeal by the District Judge, the owner took a plea that the order of confiscation of the vehicle was

passed without hearing him. The appeal was allowed on the ground of breach of principles of natural justice. The order of confiscation was set aside and the matter was remanded back to the Authorized Officer with a direction to consider all aspects of the case and pass orders afresh. In compliance of the order of the appellate court, the Authorized Officer held a detailed enquiry and passed order again confiscating the lorry. The owner of the vehicle filed appeal before the District Court and the appeal was allowed by the Additional District Judge, Pathanamthitta. It is that judgment of the Additional District Judge that is called in question and is the subject matter of the present writ petition before the High Court. The propriety, legality and correctness was questioned in the writ petition.

The matter was heard by the Hon'ble Justice Sri S.S. Satheesa Chandran. It was argued on behalf of the petitioner that the District Judge committed an error overlooking the provision in the Kerala Forest Act that the burden of proof is on the owner of the vehicle to prove his innocence and further that he has taken all precautions necessary against the use of the vehicle for any illegal purpose. In the present case, the owner himself was found driving the vehicle. Another glaring omission in the observation of the appellate court was that there is no evidence to show that the timber

belongs to the Government. The next ground for drawing conclusion by the District Court was that the seized property was not produced before the Magistrate having jurisdiction over the area. This conclusion of course does stand to the test of the law laid down by the Supreme Court of India in the "State of Kerala Vs. Ancy Phillip" (2008).

After hearing the arguments of the counsel for the respondent, the court found that none of the reasons formulated by the District Judge to quash the confiscation order is sustainable under law or facts. The Hon'ble High Court adverted to all the points urged by the counsel for the respondent. It was submitted that the word 'forest' is not defined and the rules cannot be applied to non-forest areas from where the timber was removed. Confiscation order was passed without notice to respondent and the property is liable for confiscation only when the alleged offence relates to a notified reserved forest. The Authorised Officer has no jurisdiction to pass the confiscation order.

The court held after referring to several definitions in the Forest Act that the respondent committed forest offence and therefore the property is seized lawfully which is liable to confiscation. Referring to many Acts of the State legislature relating to protection of trees, the court held that seizure of property can be made when the act relates to non-forest land as well. On the argument that in the present case the timber is not removed from reserved forest but trees are cut in *patta* land, it was held that the

Kerala Forest Act provides for protection of land at the disposal of the Government not included in any reserved forest. It was held that the District Judge had interfered with the order of confiscation taking a view that trees were cut and removed from a patta land and therefore it is impossible to conclude that the respondent was transporting a forest produce fully knowing that it was a forest produce. It seems that the court below was misled to conclude that seizure under Forest Act and also confiscation proceedings taken thereafter are applicable only in respect of forest produce and not of timber. The respondent was not aware of the notification of the Government by which anjili trees are prohibited from felling. It could be one among the various circumstances that has to be looked into whether he has shown justifiable cause as provided in the Act to avoid confiscation of the vehicle. It is open to the respondent to canvass whatever grounds open and available to him to impeach the confiscation before the court below.

With a view to give an opportunity to the Respondent/Owner of the vehicle to defend himself from the liability of confiscation of his vehicle, the High Court set aside the judgment of the court below and remitted the matter for fresh disposal with a direction to for hearing of the appeal on top priority. The petition was thus disposed of on 9.7.2010. .

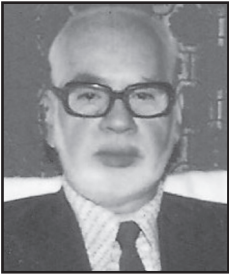
**Source:**

Internet

**K.B.R**

# OBITUARY

**A. RAMAKRISHNA, 10.04.1923 – 30.12.2016**



Sri Angulyabharanam Ramakrishna, Retired Chief Conservator of Forests, Andhra Pradesh, passed away on December 30, 2016 at Hyderabad. He was 93. He has been suffering for a long while from a

medical condition known as Apiration Pneumonitis.

Born to a medical doctor, he was a lone and an affectionate son among several daughters. His father was phenomenally committed to educate his children well and so also his son. Sri Ramakrishna graduated from Madras Presidency College with B.Sc. (Hons) degree. He was eventually selected to the Madras Forest Service and was deputed to the Indian Forest College, Dehra Dun for training in forestry. He earned the diploma of Associate of Indian Forest College (A.I.F.C). He joined after training as Assistant Conservator of Forests in the erstwhile Madras State. When the state of Andhra was carved out in 1953, he was allotted to Andhra and after the States Reorganization in 1956, he was appointed to the Andhra Pradesh Forest Service. When the Indian Forest Service was constituted, he was appointed to the Indian Forest Service in 1966. Sri A. Ramakrishna had the distinction of being historically and chronologically first Principal Chief Conservator of Forests of the State of Andhra Pradesh.

After successful completion of the forestry course at Dehra Dun, Sri Ramakrishna was posted

for practical training in Dachur Range in Nellore district, then as Assistant Conservator of Forests and later as District Forest Officer. He was married to Smt. Krishnaveni when he was in Dachur Range for training. His postings were varied geographically and functionally. He worked as District Forest Officer/Working Plan Officer at Nandyal, Cuddapah, Nellore and Guntur and as Conservator of Forests, Nizamabad, Adilabad, Kakinada and Warangal. He was also Conservator of Forests of Research and Development. He was then promoted as Additional Chief Conservator of Forests and finally as Chief Conservator of Forests of the State of Andhra Pradesh.

Sri A. Ramakrishna was a strict disciplinarian, a great learner and believed in strong governance. He worked through the ranks diligently with unwavering commitment to public service. His alacrity in taking decisions are too well known to all those who worked with him. After an eventful career in three states, viz. erstwhile State of Madras, Andhra and Andhra Pradesh, Sri Ramakrishna retired in 1981.

Amply assisted by wife Smt. Krishnaveni, one of his daughters pursued medical education and his son is an IITian. He leaves behind his wife, two daughters, sons-in-law, son, three grandsons, a grand- daughter-in-law, a great grand-daughter and a host of friends and grieving colleagues.

**May his soul rest in peace.**

**A.V.R.K.R & V.J.N**



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