

VANA PREMI



Nav Say Navay Sall Tak Ke Bachon Ka Sathi

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Vol. 23

MAY - 2022

No. 5



Sambar deer
(*Rusa unicolor*)

Photo: T.S. Prasanna Kumar



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**THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED
FOREST OFFICERS
Telangana & Andhra Pradesh**

(Regd. No.557/1990)

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Maecenas Editor : Mohammad Thayyab

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Date of Publication: 26-4-2022

/ Total Pages 60

Editorial:**INVEST IN OUR PLANET**

Just concluded, “Earth Day” has been celebrated worldwide since 1970 by people from all walks of life who are concerned about preserving the environment. (Earth day was on Friday, April 22nd 2022). The first birthday was celebrated on April 22nd 1970, when twenty million people, including children across America, gathered in the local streets, parks and auditoriums to demand a healthy, sustainable environment. These celebrations effectively stopped traffic in New York City when 20,000 people packed Union Square to see Hollywood actor Paul Newman and hear a speech by New York City Mayor John Lindsay, who arrived on an electric bus. They were concerned about their cities laden with smog, polluted rivers, rapid pollution and other environmental hazards. Since then, this event has been celebrated worldwide by people from all walks of life, considering making a sustainable future for the children.

Throughout the 1970s, Earth Day observances eventually led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts. Earth Day is the most significant secular holiday globally, with more than 500 million people taking part in 174 countries worldwide. It’s heartening to note that Google has celebrated Earth Day with animated doodles on its home page since 2001.

The sad part is that the conditions of exploitation of nature are similar or even worse in every part of the world. During these years - events, festivals and overall awareness campaigns mark Earth Day for preserving the environment. Protecting the Earth is the urgent need of the hour and, by all means, a massive and collective task. We know the governments on their own cannot handle this. But as commoners, there are many things that we can do to make a difference. Even small changes can have a significant impact. The Earth Day 2022 theme is to “invest in our planet”. What will you do? Spread awareness on the Earth Day

events, activities, and what individuals, children, and organizations can do to make a difference -together for everyone, every day. “Invest in our planet”.

“The Earth is a living organism; keep it alive.

The Earth is our home.

We share it with all creatures.

It’s the only home we have.

Love the Earth-

It gives us so much;

Look after all who live in our home,

It is a beautiful place,

Look after the Earth.”

The content of this David Bowdler’s small number (DB Music &Film- from Kent, England) is not new to us. Every creature, by default, imbibes this since its initial breathing. As it grows, selfishness takes control and tries to exploit nature in all possible ways, not necessarily for survival alone. And the much “Evolved, Advanced, Intelligent and dominant” human beings have mastered the exploitation techniques. There is no question that Earth has been a giving planet. Everything humans needed to survive and thrive was provided by the natural world around us: food, water, medicine, materials for shelter, and even natural cycles such as climate and nutrients. Scientists have called such gifts’ ecosystem services’; however, the recognition of such services goes back thousands of years, perhaps even further if one accepts the caves paintings at Lascaux as evidence.

Yet we have so disconnected ourselves from the natural world that it is easy—and often convenient—to forget that nature remains as giving as ever, even as it vanishes bit by bit. The rise of technology and industry may have distanced us superficially from nature. Still, it has not changed our reliance on the natural world: most of what we use and consume daily remains the product of multitudes of interactions within nature, and many of those interactions are imperiled.

Even as the Earth hits new milestones every year in population, one billion people in the world do not have enough food and go hungry; meanwhile, the rapid expansion of agriculture is one of the leading causes of global environmental degradation, including greenhouse gas emissions, destruction of forests, marine pollution, mass extinction, water scarcity, and soil degradation. So, how do we feed the human population—which continues to rise and is expected to hit nine billion by 2050—while preserving the multitude of ecosystem services that support global food production?

The near-total consensus by climatologists that human activities are warming the Earth continues to be challenged by outsiders. Whether or not the biotic pump theory will one day fall into this grouping remains to be seen. First published in 2007 by two Russian physicists, Victor Gorshkov and Anastassia Makarieva, the still little-known biotic pump theory postulates that forests are the driving force behind precipitation over landmasses.

Ecosystems' benefits to human well-being have historically been provided free of charge, increasing their demand. Although the global economic value of ecosystem services may be challenging to measure, it almost certainly rivals or exceeds aggregate global gross domestic product, and ecosystem benefits frequently outweigh the costs of their conservation.

The current system is broken," said climatologist Bob Watson, a Blue Planet winner in 2010 and the instigator of the report. "It is driving humanity to a future that is 3-5 degrees Celsius warmer than our species has ever known and is eliminating the ecology we depend on for our health, wealth, and senses of self. We cannot assume that technological fixes will come fast enough. Instead, we need human solutions. The good news is that they exist, but decision-makers must be bold and forward-thinking to seize them.

It will be very apt and exciting to know the earlier Earth Day Themes.

2021 – Restore Our Earth: This theme emphasizes that everything on Earth is interdependent. Therefore, we must protect Earth to protect everyone.

2020 – Climate Action: This Earth Day focused on climate and urged people to act against climate change.

2019 – Protect Our Species: With the "Protect Our Species" theme, Earth Day brought to attention the destruction human activities have caused.

2018 – End Plastic Pollution: The Earth Day theme urged people to understand the harms of plastic and limit its use.

2017 – Environmental & Climate Literacy: The Earth Day theme focused on making people aware of climate change.

2016 – Trees for the Earth: Earth Day celebration raised awareness about the shrinking tree cover. It encouraged people to plant more trees and prevent deforestation.

2015 – It's Our Turn to Lead: This Earth Day demanded commitment from people, leaders, and activists to protect the environment.

2014 – Green Cities: Not concrete jungles, but cities full of vegetation for a healthy environment. This was the theme of Earth Day 2014.

2013 – The Face of Climate Change: The Earth Day theme was "The Face of Climate". The aim was to draw the public's attention to the harmful effects of climate change.

2012 – Mobilize the Earth: This theme requests that every individual should take part in protecting the planet.

2011 – Clear the Air: The Earth Day theme urged people to restrict activities that pollute the air. Furthermore, it asked people to take steps to clean the air.

2010 – A Billion Acts of Green: Even small efforts can go a long way to protecting the environment.

2009 – How Do You Get Around: In 2009, the Earth Day celebration revolved around finding ways to reduce the ill effects of climate change.

2008 – Trees Please: Without trees, the Earth will become lifeless. Therefore, Earth Day 2008 urged people to protect trees.

- 2007 – Be Kind to the Earth – starting from saving resources: Earth resources are limited, so we need to spend them wisely. Earth day 2007 focused on protecting natural resources.
- 2006 – Science and Faith: We should put our faith in science and devise methods to protect our planet.
- 2005 – Healthy Environment for Children: In 2005, Earth Day aimed to inspire people to protect the environment for future generations

The Blue Planet laureates call on the world to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, switch out GDP (gross domestic product) for a more holistic measure of national well-being, decouple environmental destruction from consumption, drop subsidies for fossil fuels and environmentally destructive agricultural practices, put a market value on biodiversity and ecosystem services, work with grassroots movements to create bottom-up action, and finally address overpopulation.

As foresters, we know all environmental issues' ramifications and remedial measures. We have to take up untiring responsibility for creating environmental awareness among the public, politicians, governments, NGOs and school children. The knowledge of Reduce,

Reuse, and Recycle for kids, is an ecological ideal we should instill in our children. Government Officers, Scientists, Teachers, educated people, and media shall also take part in the awareness programmes in protecting Mother Earth and the environment, as suggested by Sereana. (Please go through these monthly activities reproduced separately). These are very simple, practical, and more satisfying, even practiced at the individual level.

“We have a dream—a world without poverty—a world that is equitable—a world that respects human rights—a world with increased and improved ethical behavior regarding poverty and natural resources—a world that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, where the challenges such as climate change, loss of biodiversity and social inequity have been successfully addressed.”

So, Invest in our planet. The key point is to act boldly, innovate broadly, and implement equitably. Every government, every business, and individual in this world has a voice. There is not going to be one person who can do it all. But now is the time. Together, we can make a difference. We need to act as a team altogether.

Happy Earth Day!

- Mohd. Thayyab

Earth Day – Suggested Monthly Awareness Programmes

1. **Choose a different snack** -Greens, fruits in the place of processed and packaged food. Or, you can go all out and make your own snacks with fresh ingredients. This way you can also get all your shopping done with reusable produce bags and glass jars.
2. **Pick up some litter:** Unfortunately, there is litter everywhere. For Earth Month, try walking around with some waste bags that you can throw the litter in whenever you see any. It's such an easy way to take care of the planet while adding hardly any time or effort to your normal routine! Children will love this!
3. **Compost your kitchen scraps:** Enormous amounts of food waste has been a growing issue in households around the world. We simply don't use all the food that we buy and end up throwing some away. A great solution to this problem is composting.
4. **Don't buy as much stuff:** We often buy more than we need, and more than we ever actually end up using. Just buying less will easily cut down on waste, but also cut down on the environmental impact of the whole production and shipping process. For Earth Month, think really hard about each of your purchases, and if they're actually

necessary. If you're not sure, just wait a few days before buying it. That urge to buy whatever it was may just go away.

5. **Reuse everything you can:** The world is stuffed to the brim with single-use disposable items, especially single-use plastics. One easy change is to only use reusable items.
6. **Get together with friends and family:** Try to gather as many of your friends and family as you can to join you for the Earth Month activities, you're engaging in. Getting into the Earth Day spirit will be much easier with everyone participating together.
7. **Get involved with your community:** Want to make a real difference in your community? Local environmental groups can accomplish more than you probably think. With the help of a group, you can get involved in saving the environment much more than at an individual level.
8. **Swap and trade:** Do you need new stuff but are worried about the environmental impact of new purchases? Don't worry, you still have plenty of options. Buying slightly used or trading with neighbors is a great way to get what you need and to recycle other people's trash. You can usually find local trade groups online, or you can go out to a thrift store to access all the used items you could need.
9. **Eat more veggies:** Another great way to help the earth is to change up your diet. Eating meat is harder on the climate than having a vegetarian or vegan diet. Instead, try reducing your meat consumption while increasing your consumption of vegetables, fruits, and legumes.

Even just having smaller meat portions during your meals can make a real difference! Not only can you save the planet this way, but you can easily save on money when you buy less meat.

10. **Start building sustainable habits:** We need to focus on building above explained habits that we can sustain year-round that will positively impact our environment, instead of only doing some activities one day, or even one month, every year.
11. **Reduce plastic use:** As newly disposed of plastic gets added to landfills, it simply piles on to the billions of tons already present and slowly decomposing. We all know that a single plastic water bottle can take up to 450 years to break down. So, choose plastic-free alternatives that are more environmentally friendly.
12. **Just go outside** Having an appreciation for our earth and its wildlife starts with actually going outside and experiencing nature for yourself. You'll grow to love the trees, the clean air, and the country by spending time surrounded by the nature we're trying so hard to protect. Make your acquaintances, friends, relatives go out, walk more than normal, maybe even make them take a hike in the woods. Do whatever you can to give them some quality time with this earth.

Apart from these, you can involve yourself in tree planting, Plant wildflowers around your neighborhood, Donate to an environmental cause, turn off the lights (and everything else): Grab some energy-saving lightbulbs, Stuff your car with reusable shopping bags: Arrange an office carpool, make some homemade bird feeders: Organize a community nature event.

"If you would not be forgotten, as soon as you are dead or rotten, either write things worth reading, or do something worth writing."

- Benjamin Franklin.



The Entreaty

P. K. Jha, IFS (Retd.)

Respected retired forest officers,

I feel it to be my privilege in getting elected as president of the retired forest officers' association, the post, hitherto, held by erudite and highly experienced retired forest officers. The association, I am sure has done its best in dealing with the problems of the members of the association in getting them resolved by the appropriate authorities as and when required. I would like to carry forward the effective work carried out so far by the association. I would also take essential steps to address issues connected with environment and climate change by making appropriate suggestions to the concerned authorities with the unbridled co-operation of the members of the executive committee and all members of the association. I would put in

sincere efforts in bringing the genuine problems, if any, being faced by the members of the association to the notice of the concerned authorities for doing the needful at the earliest.

I look forward for the best cooperation of all the members of the retired forest officers' association and also beseech all those who are yet to become members of the association to join as members and strengthen our hands in addressing issues of retired officers.

P.K. Jha, IFS (Retd.)

President

Association of Retired Forest
officers of Telangana and AP

Minutes of the General Body Meeting of the Association of Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh

95th General Body Meeting of the Association of Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh was held at Aranya Bhavan, Hyderabad, on 27th March 2022 under the Chairmanship of Sri S.K. Das, IFS (Retd.), President. Secretary Sri A.V. Govindarajulu extended a hearty welcome to the Members and their spouses at the General Body Meeting of the Association, which took place on 15th December 2019, due to the Covid 19 pandemic for the last two years.

1. The General Body paid rich tributes to the members who passed away between the last General Body Meeting and the present due to old age and other ailments illness and recalled their services to the Forest Department in various capacities. The members are (Sarvasri) B. Malla Reddy

(23.05.2020), T. Narayana Swamy (29.06.2020), B. Bhomarajam (03.10.2020), D.S. Gangakhedkar (05.01.2021), V. Subba Raghavaiah (05.02.2021), Shaik Noor Ahmed (07.03.2021), T. Prabhakar Rao (25.04.2021), P.S. Reddy (09.05.2021), K. Mohan Reddy (18.07.2021), L. Lohit Reddy (19.08.2021), B. Janardhan (06.09.2021), T. Krishna Murthy (26.12.2021), A.V. Ramakrishna Rao (08.01.2022), B. Pratap Reddy (12.02.2022) and non-Members include (Sarvasri) Poli Reddy (30.04.2020), D. Narasaiah (04.05.2020), G. David (10.05.2020), E. Venugopal Rao (24.05.2020), D. Ramana Babu (03.10.2021), Bhaskar Ramana Murthy (31.10.2021), Ramana Kumar (29.12.2021), Sri B. Ranganath Swamy (07.03.2022), Badavath Motilal (13.02.2022).

2. Special Tributes were paid to T. Narayana Swamy, IFS (Retd) Vice-President of the Association, for his services to the Association. He had been a member of the Association since its beginning of the Association in 1989. He was one of the 18 visionaries who met in 1989 and decided to form the Association. He was actively associated with the growth of the Association. He was Secretary to the Association for four terms. He served the Association as Vice-President from 29.12.2013 till he breathed his last on 29.06.2020.
3. The Secretary read out Action Taken Report and resolutions passed in 108th Executive Committee held on 5th March 2022.
4. The Association felicitated the veteran members (Sarvasri) S.D. Mukarji, N. Linganna, N. Padmanabha Reddy, Y. Ram Mohan Rao, K. Krishna Bhupal Rao, K. Murali Krishna Rao on attaining 80 years of age and (Sarvasri) A.V. Govindarajulu, V.V. Rajam on attaining 75 years age.
5. Sri S.K. Das, IFS (R), President of the Association, released the Book "OKA Vanapremi Jeevanayam (Sweeya Charitra) – an autobiography written by Sri K. Buchi Ra
6. Sri. V.V. Hari Prasad had given an account achievement of Sri Tulasi Rao and informed the General Body about Book written by Tulasi Rao on Eastern ghat. Sri.S. K. Das, IFS(R) President of Association, felicitated him along with Sri V.V.Rajam and his batchmates Sri V.V. Hari Prasad, Sri K. Dileep Kumar and Mohd Abdul Waheed.
7. Sri R.M. Dobrial, IFS PCCF (HOFF) CWLW (Fac), Telangana, addressed the General Body, assured all help to the Association, and promised to consult the Association whenever necessary in forestry matters. Sri S.K.Das IFS (R), President of the Association, felicitated the Principal Chief Conservator Forests.
8. Then the election of New Office Bearers of the Association had been taken up, and the following were elected for the posts noted against each.

Sarvasri-

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | P.K. Jha, IFS (R) | President |
| 2. | G. Krishna Murthy | Vice President |
| 3. | B.M. Swami Das | Secretary |
| 4. | A. Shankaran | Jt. Secretary |
| 5. | Sardar Iqbal Singh | Treasurer |
| 6. | D. Basava Sankar Rao | Auditor |

9. **Executive Committee Members:**

1. N. Shyam Prasad, IFS (R)
2. D. Nagabhushanam Dasari , IFS (R)
3. A.V. Govindarajulu
4. V.V. Rajam
5. G. Raman Goud
6. Mohd. Abdul Waheed
7. V.V. Hari Prasad
8. A. Kishan

10. **Permanent Invitees:**

1. K. Buchi Ram Reddy IFS (R)
2. J.V. Sharma, IFS(R)
3. Qamar Mohd Khan

11. **Editorial Board:**

1. P.K. Jha IFS (R) – President Ex-Officio
President of the Association
2. B.M. Swami Dass – Convenor & Ex-Officio
Secretary of the Association.
3. Mohammed Thayyab – Editor
4. D. Nagabhushanam IFS (R) –
Associate Editor
5. K. Pradeep - Member.
6. Dr N.V. Jayanth Babu -Member.
7. V.V. Hari Prasad – Member.
8. D. Basava Sankar Rao – Auditor.

12. **Assumption of New Body:**

- a. Sri R.K. Jha IFS (R) assumed office soon after the election, followed by Sri. G. Krishna Murthy as Vice President, Sri B.M. Swami Das as Secretary of the Association and Sri Sardar Iqbal Singh as Treasurer of the Association.

- b. Sri Mohammed Thayyab assumed as Editor of Vanapremi and Sri D. Nagabhushanam IFS (R) as Associate Editor, Sri V.V. Hariprasad, and Dr N.V. Jayanth Babu as Members of the Editorial Board.
- c. Sri D. Nagabhushanam Dasari, IFS(R), Sri A.V. Govindarajulu, Sri V.V. Rajam, Sri G. Raman Goud, Sri Mohd. Abdul Waheed and Sri V.V. Hari Prasad assumed office as Executive Members of the Association.
13. The 95th General Body condoned the delay in conducting General Body meetings in 2020 & 2021 due to Covid 19 situation, and a resolution was passed to that effect. Sri P.K. Jha IFS (R),

President, thanked the outgoing President and other office bearers for their services to the Association. THE SECRETARY, Sri B. M. Swami Das, also thanked the outgoing office bearers. Editorial Board and Executive Committee for their services to the Association. Sri. S.K. Das, IFS (R), the outgoing President, expressed his good wishes to the newly elected body. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Sri B.M. Swami Das, Secretary of the Association. Sri Mohd. Thayyab Editor Vanapremi and Sri A.V. Govindarajulu, Executive Member of the Association, hosted the lunch in Haritha Forest Canteen at Aranya Bhavan. The members disbursed after lunch.

- SECRETARY

Appeal to the Subscribers of VanaPremi

I convey my best wishes to all those Forest Officers who have retired to attain the superannuation age. It is a well-known fact that the Retired Forest officers, right from the cadre of ACF to PCCF, decided very long back and started this association for retired forest officers. The association has been functioning quite actively while discussing issues related to retired forest officers threadbare and taking necessary steps in a democratic process by putting all the heads together as and when required.

The Executive Body observed, to the members' disappointment, that some of the retired forest officers are yet to become members of the association - maybe because of the Covid pandemic or due to other preoccupations, they have been busy with.

Now, VANAPREMI feels it to be a privilege to invite all the retired forest officers to become members of the Association by paying a one-time fee and try to attend the Association meetings and strengthen its hands in functioning in the best possible way with your valuable inputs and active participation.

The Details:

Membership fee: Rs. 5000.

Name of the A/c holder: Association of Retired Forest Officers T & AP

Account numbers: 75450100011453 & 75450100003125

Name of the Bank & Br: Bank of Baroda, Nallakunta Branch, Hyderabad -500044

IFSC Code: BARB0VJNAKU ('0' in the middle is the number '0' and not the alphabet 'O').

- Editor, VanaPremi.

The Haircut

Mohammad Ahsan, IFS (Retd.)



That was the autumn of 2001.

It was a holiday evening and ideal for a haircut. I drove my silver grey Maruti 800, UP07G- 9907, through Hazratganj, took a turn to right for Shahnajaf Road, stopped it about forty meters ahead opposite 'Stylo Beauty Parlor'. Then I crossed over the road to enter this hair cutting saloon I had been patronizing for the last two years. I had not to wait much for my turn. In any case there was sufficient number of film magazines to rummage through for passing the time quite pleasantly.

My haircut is generally a low-key affair. I don't believe in any particular hair style, pattern or fashion of the day. My instructions to barbers are simple. 'Don't touch them (the hair) in the middle but ensure they don't touch my ears or mane next 35 days'. I believed long hair and unkempt beard are the privilege of poets and artists only. I never try to compete with them.

Barbers generally make a swift action of my hair cut and feel happy as they get the full remuneration without any fuss from my side. It were the similar circumstances that prevailed that evening too. I paid my money; felt contented with the haircut and came out of the saloon. I looked at the car parked on the opposite side of the road. But instead of the car, I looked at a void, an open space where the car was parked. It took me a long moment to grasp the uniqueness of the situation. I felt a panic rising in me. Ah, so my damsel, the Maruti car, a companion of a decade, is finally stolen; I thought to myself.

Then I looked around. There were few persons of varying ages gossiping on the footpath. I asked one of them, 'There was a Maruti car standing there right in front, have you seen it?'

'Of course it was there but I don't know where it is now. Was it yours?' He retorted back.

I felt little irritated. Then I inquired with another person. He had the least idea either about the car or about me. My inquiries with the third person proved more fruitful. He said, 'There was a car here, being loaded by some policemen on a crane, only if I had known it was yours and that you were in the hair cutting saloon, I would have let it be known'.

He tried to be charitable. I felt anger on his pretensions, but asked, 'Where would they have taken that car to? Any idea?'

'Well, yes, generally they take them to Hazratganj Kotwali'.

'OK, thank you very much' I said and rushed to Hazratganj Kotwali on feet. I was almost running to the place which was not more than half a mile from this hair cutting saloon.

When I reached Hazratganj Kotwali, the evening had already set in, and darkness was making its way. In the Kotwali campus, the very first person I accosted I asked, 'Sir, I have my car being brought in here, do you have any idea'. He pointed me to another middle aged, baldish, stocky gentleman sitting in a corner with a register and a wad of papers.

I asked him the similar question, 'Sir, I have been told my Maruti car has been brought in here, any idea, sir?'

He looked at me like at some speck of dirt, then asked, 'What is the number of the car?'

I told him the number. He went through the register, scanned his papers, and pointed towards the parking lot in the Kotwali campus and said, 'Go, identify your vehicle.'

This parking lot was an assortment of vehicles of different denominations, lot many standing there for

months and almost converted to rust, some others in better condition. By and large the sight was depressing. Then I saw my Maruti 800, that silver grey car, which was my companion through all thick and thin of my life for the last ten years, which was my best support whenever Shukla, my driver of official car, vanished without a slightest whisper. She was there amidst that shabby assortment. I really felt sorry, rather I would say, my heart bled for her. I could feel her humiliation of being molested by a bunch of imperious policemen by being loaded on a dirty municipality crane, of being transported recklessly before the whole crowd of onlookers, of being dumped in this parking lot of Kotwali amidst other automobiles which, on the other hand, were detained for a number of heinous crimes like drug trafficking, murder and mayhem. And here, her only crime was she was parked at a place which the police men thought was not the place for parking, and contrary to it I thought it was.

Then I told that stocky policeman, 'Sir, I had no idea the place was not meant for parking, I always parked my car there whenever I was on the job of haircut, and no one ever objected to it, I was there in the hair cutting saloon only for a few minutes, sir, I am a responsible officer, only if I had known the place was not meant for parking I would not have parked it there, under such trivial circumstances the car deserved to be released, sir, so sorry for all the trouble you took for transporting my car all the way.'

The policeman looked at me, on my whole outline from feet to head in an amused manner, then said, 'Show me the driving license and papers of the vehicle.'

I felt like being struck with a lightning. The driving license and papers! Ah, I never kept them in my Maruti. The doors of this damsel had the uncanny habit of being unlocked by any key, sometimes even by a hair pin; and on so many occasions under a bout of forgetfulness I had locked the car by pressing the knob leaving the key behind in the ignition. And then realizing the disaster, I was able to open it by any key that came handy. Once I could open it even by my almirah key. As a matter of principle I never kept any valuable papers in the vehicle, as they had the possibility of being stolen.

The driving license and registration papers were most valuable ones.

I told this limitation to the policeman and tried to convince him of my credentials by offering him my visiting card. He did not seem impressed. Then he announced, 'Please deposit Rs 750/- to get the car released'. Now after so many years when I am writing this story, I am not sure whether he had really used the word 'please'.

Once again I tried with my best convincing power to impress upon him, as the mistake was done in a bona fide manner without any intension of malice, the amount might be waved off.

He said, 'Sir, out of this Rs 750, we have to pay a rental of Rs 250 to municipality who owns these car lifting cranes. Rest is penalty. Even if, considering you are a responsible officer, I wave this penalty, I can't wave this rental of Rs 250 owing to municipality. So just show me the papers and deposit Rs 250.'

Once again I was thunder struck. Rs 250! I had driven down to Hazratganj for a hair cut that cost me only Rs 30. I had not cared as to the money my purse was carrying. After paying Rs 30 for the celebrated hair cut I was left with only Rs 120, and here was this policeman who was asking me for Rs 250 as a rental of the crane that had transported my car to this Goddamn Kotwali. I cursed the whole thing. Then I said to the police person, 'Sir, I am coming in a fifteen minutes' time.'

Outside the Kotwali, I hired a rickshaw and proceeded towards A13, Forest Colony, 17 Rana Pratap Marg, Lucknow, my official residence. As I was entering the colony gate I saw signs of surprise on the face of chowkidar who had watched me going on my car about an hour before, and now he was wondering on my return journey on a rickshaw. I guess he was imagining lot of things. I cursed at the number 13 of my house, which I believed brought me one calamity or the other, then and now.

I entered my home surreptitiously, took out the driving license and the registration papers from my personal iron almirah, put in some money in the purse, and

tried to step out as soon as possible. In the meanwhile my wife Rani had spotted me and asked, 'What is the matter? You are in such a hurry!' I said, 'Nothing important', and pushed my way out.

Once again, in Kotwali , I said to the policeman, 'Sir, here are the papers and here is the fine and rental of crane. Kindly release my car as soon as possible'. He made me sign a few papers and obliged with a smile.

I kept patronizing the Stylo Beauty Parlor at Shahnajaf Road for few more years to come, but with certain precautions. I preferred going there on a scooty which I had bought for my younger daughter Saman, with a belief the policemen would not mind its parking right

outside the saloon ; or on my official Ambassador car with a driver waiting for me outside the saloon. Policemen don't mind the official vehicles being wrongly parked as much as the personal cars. However, a few years before now, I discovered a hair cutting saloon at Dalibagh, just a furlong away from my Rana Pratap Marg home. Either I walked down the place or used Saman's scooty which she had left behind for me after joining the National Law College at Bhopal.

However, that car lifting event of autumn 2001 left in me a permanent fear of those car lifting cranes of Lucknow Municipal Corporation. Now I think ten times before parking my present Ford Figo at any place in the town.

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Do You think you are a spent force?

I don't think you are!

When I contact excellent officers, often I hear them telling me they consider themselves to be a spent force; they have played the innings; they have become lazy; they were habituated to correct the drafts put up and never penned any during their service etc. But I would like to tell you how wrong they are. There are a lot of excellent, published authors in the world that did not start writing until they retired. But regardless of your age, you may have a great narrative. Some people write for the sheer joy of writing and most just post the work online for the world to enjoy. You may be one among them; please check.

You may be a professional with vast experience in a particular field but have a good flair in an unconnected area- you are welcome to share your knowledge with the retired, working and the public as well.

You are the one we need if you are not happy with the articles (content-wise or standard-wise) being published in Vana Premi month after month. Just scribble your heart content to a good article and mail it to me preferably by the 10th of every month, but no later than the 15th -please note. You can add good photographs and drawings wherever you feel necessary.

Though all matters related to Forestry & wildlife and Environment are generally preferred: seasonal articles, travel and vacation articles: health-related articles, personal grooming and professional articles dealing with senior citizens, home and family themes, puzzles, cartoons, trivia, jokes, quotes related to Forestry and services are not taboo and will be considered basing on the available space.

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Promotion of Agroforestry and Private forestry Need for right interventions

P. Mallikharjuna Rao, IFS (Retd.)

Agro forestry and private forestry are shown as two key instruments to achieve carbon neutral economy in the union budget, 2022-23 presented recently. It is explained that agro forestry is cultivation of short rotation tree crops for small sized wood generally by farmers while private forestry is associated with growing of medium and long rotation tree crops by companies or individuals in their land. Agro forestry which is an integration of tree growing with the farming to meet the needs of fuel, small timber, fodder, green manure is one of the oldest traditional practices in several parts of the country. Although agro forestry was promoted as a commercial farming after launch of social forestry initiatives during 1970s, the phenomenal growth could be seen only after enunciation of National Forest Policy, 1988. The policy clearly stated that, industries should be no more dependent on natural forest and instead secure raw materials preferably from the farmers by promoting agroforestry through inputs of planting materials, fertilisers, credit, buy back arrangement etc. Today the annual wood requirement of industries is met mainly from agro forestry sources (90 percent) and remaining from natural forest (4%) and imports (6%) according to different estimates. The annual production of wood from trees outside forests is assessed to be 85 million cu meters from about 29.4 million hectares of area (ISFR, 2021). As far as production of small sized wood is concerned, the country could achieve self-sufficiency. However, there is no good progress in cultivation of medium and long rotation crops due to which there is shortage of about 6 million cu meters of wood which is met through imports. Some people from industries are trying to project that stringency of forest laws and rigid licensing system is responsible for this kind of situation. It is not sensible to attribute forest laws as the reason for poor progress in one particular segment of wood production (6 million cu meters) when there is spectacular growth in overall progress of agro forestry (85 million cu meters) over a period of past 3

decades. It is heartening to note that the Government of India is now envisaging to take forward and boost this development of agroforestry sector in a big way. To happen this, the Government is contemplating to initiate some policy measures and legal reforms in addition to launch of some incentives, concessions and supportive interventions. It is understood from certain media reports that a few representatives of industries and some plantation experts are trying to push certain policy reforms which do not address the real issues of the sector but will have serious implications on conservation of natural forests and thereby defeating the very purpose of the programme to make the country a Carbon neutral one. It becomes therefore necessary for the Government of India to devise a comprehensive agro-forestry development scheme reflecting the needs of wide cross section of stake holders and not merely of wood based industries.

Proposal from plantation experts:

A few plantation experts have flagged certain issues such as poor quality of planting materials in nurseries, inadequate extension services, and wide price fluctuations due to long harvesting period and no incentives for carbon sequestration responsible for limiting the growth of agro forestry. They have therefore prescribed good solutions to address them in the form of developing a frame work for accreditation of private nurseries for providing quality planting stock, establishing wood markets with effective networking with industries, facilitating carbon trading and making intensive research and development efforts for accelerating growth in this sector.

However, their proposal to expand wood based industries without linking to availability of wood will have disastrous effect on protection of natural forest and environment. Further suggestion of treating wood based industry on par with food processing industry is

not valid as the present capacity of industries to process the food is below 5 percent of the total food grains/ material production whereas the capacity of wood based industries is more than the wood production.

Reliance only on wood based industries while ignoring 5 million traditional artisans dependent on wood and bamboo who are facing the wood shortage problem and proposing the model of integrated development of Agro-forestry and wood based industries does not go well with the policy of inclusive development of present Government.

The actual reason for not growing medium and long term tree crops by farmers is long gestation and uncertain and uneconomic returns and the same is not taken into account while proposing policy reforms. During 1990s several private companies collected money from people for raising teak plantations by projecting that investors would get handsome returns of their investment after 20 years of plantation was proved to be a false one later. Hence, it is very important to project economic benefits in a realistic terms and to work out proper incentives and concessions to attract the investments.

Proposal from wood based industries:

Recently on 18th February, 2022, the Federation of Indian Plywood and Panel Industries met the Hon'ble Prime Minister and submitted a memorandum suggesting two policy levers which can pave the way for wood based industries to achieve their growth potential. One, presently wood produced from farm lands are treated as forest produce requiring regulatory clearances and discouraging farmers growing from trees. Hence it is proposed to shift agro-forestry from forest to agricultural sector and thereby providing all the economic benefits of agriculture to the farmers engaged in agro forestry. Second, it is proposed for removal of licensing requirement for wood based units including veneer mills, saw mills, ply wood factories, medium density fibre board units, particle board units, pulp and paper Units, furniture industry and all other industries that primarily use farm wood and its produce as raw materials. This will enable local producers and other users of farm wood to build sustainable businesses

at the plantation sites and generate employment and livelihood opportunities for farmers.

This proposal of Industries finds no rationale on several counts:

First, if the classification of wood as a forest produce is regulatory obstacle, it is not known as to how the area Trees Outside Forests (TOFs) can reach to 8.9% of geographical area and annual production to 85 million cu metres in 2021 (Indian State of Forest report, 2021). A research study undertaken by Planning Commission (2011) on supply of determinants of timber trade in India concluded that the forest conservation measures and existing forest laws were not limiting factors for growing tree crops, wood production and timber trade in India. In fact, several tree spp grown by the farmers are already brought under the category of exemption from felling and transit rules under relevant acts. For a few species of trees which were not possible to exempt from forest laws, the procedures are simplified with online applications and time bound approvals. Earlier, in the name of promoting bamboo cultivation in large scale and to expand livelihood opportunities bamboo was declared as horticultural produce. There was no however, significant expansion of bamboo cultivation did not take place. In fact, it is causing damage to the bamboo in natural forests thus affecting adversely the livelihood and subsistence needs of forest dependent communities. According to the recent forest survey report, the bamboo bearing area of the country decreased by 10,594 sq kms as compared to previous report of 2019 (IFSR, 2021). It is therefore advisable not to take a blanket policy measure of such declaration which may not help expansion of area under cultivation of tree crops but it is likely to cause adverse effect on protection of forests.

Second, there are no restrictive rules that Government cannot channelize incentives from public funds unless agro-forestry is shifted from forest to agricultural sectors. Hence such kind of proposal mooted by industry but not by the farmers who are primary stakeholders is unwarranted.

Third, proposing for removal of licensing requirements instead of suggesting time bound clearances and

hassle free grant of licenses is a conspiracy from a particular section of people. If private forestry with medium and long term tree crops now takes off, the wood production will start coming out only after 10 to 15 years and till that time it is not known as to how these industries can secure raw material. With no controls on setting up of forest based industries there will be large scale illegal removals from the forest which cannot be prevented by the Forest Departments which are understaffed. It is not sure whether this move helps to expand the area under agro/private forestry but it is certain to cause irreparable damage to the forest by impacting the carbon neutrality as envisaged by the Government of India besides impeding the livelihoods.

Fourth, there are no restrictions for the farmers to cut, peel, do some primary processing at the plantation sites and generate local employment which is already happening in agroforestry sector of Andhra Pradesh. There is no need to do away with licensing of wood based industries to promote such activities.

Inclusive approach needed:

The proposals discussed above are heavily inclined to benefit the industries while ignoring the interests of other stake holders such as farmers, wood based artisans, forest dependent communities, foresters, plantation experts, industries, and various other public, private and voluntary agencies associated with agro-forestry. Andhra Pradesh is one of the pioneering states in agro-forestry development post national forest policy, 1988. Farmers are growing eucalyptus, subabul and casuarina in about 4.55 lakh acres area. A marketing arrangement introduced in 1999 for sale of wood from farmers to paper mills with the support of Government is evolved into a unique system and stands as a good example for the whole country. Every year, group of ministers headed by minister for marketing/agriculture negotiate with paper mills in the presence of farmer representatives and fix the rate of pulp wood material. As the Commissioner, Agricultural Marketing Department (2014 to 2016), I had the opportunity to oversee this marketing arrangement through agricultural market committees to paper mills and coordinating with industries for adhering to the price fixed and to ensure smooth payments to farmers. Experience suggest that

the real problems in the trade relate to pricing and marketing issues. Farmers and other stake holders have been requesting for price guarantee/minimum support price and timely payments without deductions. Further farmers are demanding not to sell pulp wood by the Government agencies i.e., forest development corporation, forest department and strict enforcement of forest laws to arrest illicit leakage of material from forests so as to maintain price stability. One paper industry viz, Sirpur paper mills did not make payments of about Rs 12 crores to farmers for the wood supplied about 8 years back. Farmers launched agitations against the Government several times on this issue. New policy interventions should take care of preventing such kind of exploitative practices by industries.

Conclusion:

Agroforestry and private forestry should be promoted aggressively to achieve carbon neutrality and sustainable development of the country. The interests of all stake holders and the inclusive approach should be guiding principle for framing suitable reforms and interventions for promoting agro-forestry and private forestry. The policy reforms and interventions should be appropriate to cover all aspects pertaining to research and development, extension services, quality planting material supplies, credit arrangements, incentives, tax concessions, net working the markets with industries, buy back arrangements, price guarantee & price support programmes, insurance schemes so as to promote the sector. It is not true that forest laws and conservation measures are hindrance to growth of agro forestry and private forestry. Wherever specific legal hurdles are found, action should be taken to simplify the procedures, Expansion of wood based industries should be linked to production and availability of wood. It is necessary to be cautious against the moves of the wood based industries and some vested interests who are advocating to dilute the forest laws in the name of promoting agro forestry and private forestry which will have serious repercussions on saving of natural forests thus adversely affecting environmental stability, livelihoods security of forest dependent people and overall development of the country. It is hoped that the wisdom of the Forest Service and Government at nation

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ISFR 2021 – Changes in Non-Forest Land and Their Implications

Dipak Sarmah, IFS (R)



As per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2021 published in January 2022 by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehra Dun, the overall forest cover of the country is 713,789 km² comprising 99,779 km² of very dense forest (VDF), 3,06,890 km² of moderately dense forest (MDF), and 3,07,120 km² of open forest (OF). The scrub forest in the country is 46,539 km². The remaining area of the country, designated as non-forest (NF), is 25,27,141 km². The total area of the country is 32,87,469 km². Comparison of these figures with the corresponding figures published in the ISFR 2019 reveals that there has been an overall increase in the forest cover of the country by 1,540 km² [VDF has increased by 501 km², MDF has decreased by 1,582 km², and OF has increased by 2,621 km²]. The scrub forest has increased by (46,539-46,297) or 242 km². The non-forest (NF) land has decreased by (25,28,923-25,27,141) or 1,782 km². Evidently, the decrease in the extent of non-forest (NF) land is significant, being even higher than the overall increase in the country's forest cover.

It may be noted that the ISFR mentions five forest-cover classes: VDF, MDF, OF, Scrub forest, and Non-forest (NF). The term Non-forest is used to signify land without any tree growth. Although Non-forest by and large represents the extensive tree-less lands outside the recorded forest area (RFA), it also includes such lands within the RFA that are barren or tree-less. A forest area when cleared of tree growth gets included in the category of Non-forest land.

Change in the extent of non-forest land broadly signifies two important changes in forest cover. **Increase or gain** in the extent of non-forest land points towards **loss in forest cover** due to clearfelling of forest for various purposes including shifting cultivation, diversion of forest for non-forest purposes such as agriculture and settlement, and forest encroachment. Such changes take place in all the four forest-cover

classes, namely, VDF, MDF, OF, and Scrub forest. **Decrease or loss** in the extent of non-forest land points towards promotion of non-forest land to tree-clad area that contributes to the forest cover i.e. **gain in forest cover**. Such promotion of NF land usually takes place in two ways: (a) due to tree planting activities; and (b) due to natural regeneration. Large-scale tree planting activities are taken up on non-forest (barren or tree-less) lands situated both inside and outside the RFA. As they grow up, these plantations progressively increase in density, appearing initially as scrub forest, then as open forest, then as moderately dense forest, and sometimes as very dense forest. In this manner, plantations raised during previous years keep on adding to the forest cover. While plantations raised on non-forest land within the RFA add to the forest cover inside the RFA, the plantations raised on non-forest land outside the RFA add to the forest cover outside the RFA. As regards natural regeneration, while improvement in the density of a normal forest takes place in a slow and steady manner, the forest areas that become non-forest because of clearfelling under shifting cultivation tend to revert back to forest rather quickly in a few years mainly because of the vigor of coppicing, usually fertile soil, copious rains, and favourable light conditions. In this manner, in areas where shifting cultivation is practised, while certain patches of forest become non-forest, certain non-forest patches get promoted to forest. It must however be conceded that the quality of the re-growth keeps on deteriorating after each cycle of shifting cultivation.

In every India State of Forest Report (ISFR), while discussing the state-wise forest and tree cover, in addition to the table showing the overall change in forest cover between the current and the previous assessment, another table called '**Forest Cover Change Matrix**' is provided. This table is very significant, as it facilitates an insight into the dynamic changes that have taken

place among the various forest-cover classes (VDF, MDF, OF, Scrub and NF) during the intervening period between the two assessments. [Every forest officer must closely study the 'Forest Cover Change Matrix' pertaining to his state in order to have a better understanding about the relative gains or losses that have taken place in the forest-cover classes during the two-year period covered by the ISFR.]

On the basis of information culled out from the Forest Cover Change Matrices of all the states/UTs provided in Chapter 13 of the ISFR 2021, the loss or gain of NF in relation to the remaining four forest-cover classes during the intervening period between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2021 are compiled and presented at Table-I.

Perusal of Table-I indicates that during the period between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2021, 9,267 km² of land belonging to one or the other forest-cover classes (VDF, MDF, OF and Scrub forest) became non-forest (NF) or tree-less, and during the same period, 11,049 km² of non-forest or tree-less land got promoted to one or the other forest-cover classes (VDF, MDF, OF and Scrub forest). It is apparent that although the country lost substantial (9,267 km²) forest cover, this loss was more than compensated by the promotion of a much larger extent (11,049 km²) of non-forest land to one or the other forest-cover classes (VDF, MDF, OF and Scrub forest). In other words, at the country level, the gain in forest cover due to tree plantation or natural regeneration has surpassed the loss of forest cover due to tree felling and other reasons by 1,782 km². Although the country has lost a sizeable portion of its forest cover, this loss has been virtually camouflaged by the gain of forest cover due to artificial or natural regeneration efforts elsewhere. A cursory glance at Table-I reveals that, while the loss of forest cover is substantial in the north-eastern states, some of the major states have also lost considerable extents of forest cover, prominent among them being Odisha (1,635 km²), Rajasthan (858 km²), Madhya Pradesh (818 km²), Jammu and Kashmir (785 km²), Gujarat (623 km²), etc.

The break-up of the total loss of forest cover (9,267 km²) is as follows: VDF (150 km²), MDF (1,493 km²),

OF (5,624 km²), and Scrub (2,000 km²). Evidently, loss of forest cover has been the highest in the category of Open forest (10-40% crown density) followed by the Scrub forest (less than 10% crown density). The loss of forest cover in the category of MDF (40-70% crown density) is also quite substantial. Besides the north-eastern states, the states of Odisha, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Rajasthan have registered substantial loss of forest cover in the categories of MDF and Open forest. In the category of Scrub forest, maximum loss has occurred in the states of Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat.

The break-up of the total gain of forest cover (11,049 km²) is as follows: VDF (38 km²), MDF (511 km²), OF (6,788 km²), and Scrub forest (3,712 km²). Thus the maximum gains have taken place in the category of Open forest followed by the Scrub forest. Besides the north-eastern states, Odisha, Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat have shown impressive gains in the category of Open forest. In the category of Scrub forest, Odisha, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, etc. have registered fairly impressive gains.

Although the loss of forest cover incurred by most of states (except Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Telangana, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and a few north-eastern states) has been made good by the growth of trees elsewhere, it is necessary to look into the matter objectively in order to find out where and how the loss of forest cover has taken place. It is an admitted fact that large extents of forest of the states/UTs have been lost on account of various non-forest activities including land grant, regularization of encroachment, agriculture, settlement, development projects, etc. The Forest Department of every state must project a clearer picture of the true status of the forests, duly enumerating and highlighting the various types of loss and their extents.

In order to analyze the loss or gain in Non-forest land in the north-eastern states, where shifting cultivation is the primary cause for the loss of forest cover, the details contained in Table-I are segregated and placed at Table-II.

Table - I:
State-Wise Loss or Gain in Non Forest (NF) Land Between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2021

State	NF (ISFR 2019)	Loss of Non-forest land (Gain in forest cover)				Total loss of NF	Gain of Non-forest land (Loss in forest cover)				Total gain of NF	Net gain or loss of NF	NF (ISFR 2021)	
		NF to		NF to			VDF to NF	MDF to NF	OF to					Scrub to NF
		Scrub	OF	MDF	VDF				NF	Scrub				
Andhra Pradesh	125,576	230	650	3	0	883	1	17	118	79	215	-668	124,908	
Arunachal Pradesh	16,826	356	608	55	9	1,028	23	129	542	23	717	-311	16,515	
Assam	49,938	35	412	23	0	470	11	69	344	6	430	-40	49,898	
Bihar	86,607	40	61	9	0	110	0	2	31	16	49	-61	86,546	
Chhattisgarh	78,971	29	151	13	0	193	7	29	34	12	82	-111	78,860	
Delhi	1,287.26	0	1.04	0.19	0	1.23	0	0.09	1.50	0	1.59	+0.36	1,287.62	
Goa	1,465	0	7	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	-7	1,458	
Gujarat	178,393	230	291	5	0	526	0	64	367	192	623	+97	178,490	
Haryana	42,456	9	66	3	0	78	0	8	61	3	72	-6	42,450	
Himachal Pradesh	39,924	8	23	0	0	31	0	1	13	1	15	-16	39,908	
Jharkhand	55,417	13	169	23	1	206	1	26	114	59	200	-6	55,411	
Karnataka	1,48,732	211	241	18	0	470	2	58	97	31	188	-282	148,450	
Kerala	17,695	16	197	43	1	257	1	35	95	0	131	-126	17,569	
Madhya Pradesh	2,24,768	93	180	11	0	284	4	116	495	203	818	+534	2,25,302	
Maharashtra	252,679	55	126	6	1	188	9	44	95	29	177	-11	252,668	
Manipur	4,299	109	106	0	0	215	6	131	223	70	430	+215	4,514	
Meghalaya	4,710	54	27	12	0	93	0	39	59	5	103	+10	4,720	
Mizoram	3,074	0	66	2	0	68	0	87	167	0	254	+186	3,260	

Contd...

State	NF (ISFR 2019)	Loss of Non-forest land (Gain in forest cover)				Total loss of NF	Gain of Non-forest land (Loss in forest cover)				Total gain of NF	Net gain or loss of NF	NF (ISFR 2021)
		NF to Scrub	NF to OF	NF to MDF	NF to VDF		VDF to NF	MDF to NF	OF to NF	Scrub to NF			
Nagaland	3,458	197	120	0	0	317	6	97	249	11	363	+46	3,504
Odisha	99,761	1,284	1,246	216	23	2,769	19	218	873	525	1,635	-1,134	98,627
Punjab	48,480	3	33	0	0	36	0	6	30	1	37	+1	48,481
Rajasthan	320,849	489	436	7	0	932	0	30	391	437	858	-74	320,775
Sikkim	3,447	4	1	0	0	5	0	0	2	15	17	+12	3,459
Tamil Nadu	102,981	32	220	9	0	261	1	6	154	2	163	-98	102,883
Telangana	87,880	133	140	4	0	277	0	18	105	226	349	+72	87,952
Tripura	2,731	1	37	8	0	46	9	23	14	0	46	0	2,731
Uttar Pradesh	225,535	13	246	3	1	263	1	25	224	25	275	+12	225,547
Uttarakhand	28,797	3	82	9	1	95	3	32	47	2	84	-11	28,786
West Bengal	71,704	5	55	4	0	64	2	11	103	8	124	+60	71,764
A & N Islands	1,505	0	3	0	0	3	0	1	1	0	2	-1	1,504
Chandigarh	91.87	0.29	0.95	0.57	0	1.81	0	0.56	0.03	0.09	0.68	-1.13	90.74
D&NH, D&D	369.23	0	3.30	0	0	3.3	0	0.06	3.14	0.27	3.47	+0.17	369.40
Jammu & Kashmir	32,976	41	742	24	1	808	44	160	566	15	785	-23	32,953
Ladakh	165,543	19	39	0	0	58	0	10	4	5	19	-39	165,504
Lakshadweep	2.90	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.90
Poducherry	437.59	0	1.89	0	0	1.89	0	0.13	0.87	0	1	-0.89	436.70
TOTAL (after rounding off)	25,28,923	3,712	6,788	511	38	11,049	150	1,493	5,624	2,000	9,267	-1,782	25,27,141

Table-II
Loss or Gain in Non Forest (NF) Land in The North-Eastern States Between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2021
(Area in km²)

State	NF (ISFR 2019)	Loss of Non-forest land (Gain in forest cover)				Total loss of NF	Gain of Non-forest land (Loss in forest cover)				Total gain of NF	Net gain or loss of NF	NF (ISFR 2021)
		NF to Scrub	NF to OF	NF to MDF	NF to VDF		VDF to NF	MDF to NF	OF to NF	Scrub to NF			
Arunachal Pradesh	16,826	356	608	55	9	1,028	23	129	542	23	717	-311	16,515
Assam	49,938	35	412	23	0	470	11	69	344	6	430	-40	49,898
Manipur	4,299	109	106	0	0	215	6	131	223	70	430	+215	4,514
Meghalaya	4,710	54	27	12	0	93	0	39	59	5	103	+10	4,720
Mizoram	3,074	0	66	2	0	68	0	87	167	0	254	+186	3,260
Nagaland	3,458	197	120	0	0	317	6	97	249	11	363	+46	3,504
Sikkim	3,447	4	1	0	0	5	0	0	2	15	17	+12	3,459
Tripura	2,731	1	37	8	0	46	9	23	14	0	46	0	2,731
TOTAL	88,483	756	1,377	100	9	2,242	55	575	1,600	130	2,360	+118	88,601

Perusal of Table-II indicates that, although the north-eastern region has lost fairly large extent of forest cover (2,360 km²) the net loss has been limited to only 118 km², as there has been considerable gain in forest cover (2,242 km²) in the region. A substantial portion of this gain may be attributed to natural re-growth (regeneration) in areas that were brought under shifting cultivation in previous years, although a small part may also be due to artificial regeneration efforts.

Out of the total loss of forest cover in the north-eastern region totaling 2,360 km², maximum loss has taken place in the category of Open forest (1,600 km²). While

55 km² of VDF has been lost, the loss in the category of MDF is quite substantial (575 km²); the loss in the category of Scrub forest is 130 km². However, the gain in forest cover has taken place mostly in the categories of Open forest (1,377 km²) and Scrub forest (756 km²). The gains in the categories of MDF and VDF are marginal, being 100 km² and 9 km², respectively. It is thus apparent that while the forest areas brought under shifting cultivation eventually revert to forest, there is setback in terms of the pace of restoration and the quality of the incoming crop.

(The writer is former PCCF (HOFF), Karnataka and served in the GoI as a Deputy Adviser, Planning Commission & as Deputy IGF, Forest Policy, MoEF. He authored number of books on forestry, wildlife and agroforestry. Presently he is serving as the Chairman of the Monitoring Committee nominated by Hon'ble Supreme Court to supervise mining operations and sale of iron ore in Karnataka.)

The Doll

At 40, Franz Kafka (1883-1924), who never married and had no children, walked through the park in Berlin when he met a girl who was crying because she had lost her favourite doll. She and Kafka searched for the doll unsuccessfully.

Kafka told her to meet him there the next day and they would come back to look for her.

The next day, when they had not yet found the doll, Kafka gave the girl a letter "written" by the doll saying "please don't cry. I took a trip to see the world. I will write to you about my adventures."

Thus began a story which continued until the end of Kafka's life.

During their meetings, Kafka read the letters of the doll carefully written with adventures and conversations that the girl found adorable.

Finally, Kafka brought back the doll (he bought one) that had returned to Berlin.

"It doesn't look like my doll at all," said the girl.

Kafka handed her another letter in which the doll wrote: "my travels have changed me." the little girl hugged the new doll and brought her happy home.

A year later Kafka died.

Many years later, the now-adult girl found a letter inside the doll. In the tiny letter signed by Kafka it was written:

"Everything you love will probably be lost, but in the end, love will return in another way."

- Richard Strachan

Is Forest Protection Mechanism Adequate? A Case Study of Telangana

Paresh Kumar Sharma, IFS (Retd.)



When I joined the AP Forest department in July 1982 and was exposed to the functioning of the Department vis a vis the position and duties of a Forest Guard (Forest Beat Officer in AP and Telangana now), I was perplexed as to how a Forest Guard could effectively protect vast area of forest placed under his control. Area of a Beat was varying from an avg of 25 Sq. Km. to 75 Sq. Km. I had inspected all the 12 Beats in the Adilabad Range during my Range Charge period. Terrain in most cases was hilly and undulating making the task even more difficult.

I felt that it was not humanly possible to protect the forests single handedly by an un-armed and pedestrian Forest Guard against illicit felling, encroachments as well as poaching. While handing over the charge of the Range the then regular FRO Sri Ram Kumar Nayak in his Leaving Note had emphasized on the need for reduction of the Beat size, providing mobility and arms to the protection staff (FG to FRO) besides provision of Special Forest Protection Force in each Division. In the backdrop of rampant smuggling of precious Teak timber, hunting of wild animals and large-scale encroachments; the suggestion of the FRO appeared to be fully justified. But there was no wherewithal of the Department in the absence of political will to do so. Though the National Commission on Agriculture in its report in 1976 had recommended to reduce the area of a Beat to 15 Sq. Km. in the plains and 10 Sq. Km. in hilly regions; no action was taken on this recommendation in AP. Many of the States had acted upon it & accordingly reduced the area of a Beat substantially.

There used to be (and is now also) a system of inspection of Beats by the superior Officers, starting from Forest Section Officer to FRO, Sub-DFO & DFO; periodically. During this, all the tree felling used to be enumerated and recorded in a Beat Felling Enumeration Register. The inspecting Officer used

to submit his Beat Inspection Report giving details of trees felled species wise along with assessment of the value of missing material and present material etc. The Inspecting Officer also used to fix up the responsibility for destruction, invariably on the concerned Forest Guard. The DFO used to initiate disciplinary action against the FG by framing charges (Charge sheet or Memorandum of Charges) basically of negligence / dereliction of duty leading to loss to Govt.

Funny part is that this used to be only the value of timber as per the FSR for Offence cases & not the market value or ecological value. Accountant General used to mention such losses in their annual Audit reports. Such Audit para used to be dropped during next audit only if the concerned staff had been penalized. Therefore, every Beat Inspection used to lead to issue of a charge sheet against the concerned FG and when the quantum of destruction used to be more - against the Forest Section Officer too. Very rarely Officers above the rank of FSO got charge sheeted on this count. As a result, the FGs in most cases used to be punished with Censure to "Stoppage of annual grade increments – with or without cumulative effect". This had demoralizing effect on the FGs and frontline staff in general. Most of them did not get promotion to the rank of FSO even after putting up 25 years of service. Besides adversely affecting the quantum of the pension when the punishment was withholding of increments with cumulative effect. In some cases, punishment used to be very harsh; that of Removal or dismissal from service. It must have been highly frustrating experience & must have led to highly demoralizing effect on them.

One more aspect needs consideration, i.e., age of the Forest Guards, varying from 18 to 58 years. As it is with advancing age the agility comes down. After crossing the age of 40 years, many FGs used to develop problems like that of Hypertension (in most cases due

to job related issues), Sugar & Heart related problems. These had adverse effect on their efficacy. In the Andhra Region every FG was provided with an assistant called as Forest Watcher. He used to accompany the FG, or they used to do the job on shift basis, in certain cases. No such assistance was available to the 1200 FGs in Telangana region. The Association of the Junior Forest Officers (Protective staff other than the FROs) had made number of representations to the Govt. to sanction the posts of Watchers in the Telangana part of the AP on par with the system in Andhra region. Govt., in early eighties had sanctioned 1200 posts of Forest Watchers to be filled up in 4 phases. In the first phase permission was given to fill up 300 posts & the permission was never given to fill up the remaining 900 posts of Forest Watchers in the name of Economy measures.

As it is vacancies used to arise in all the cadres due to retirements (on attaining the age of superannuation) or removal/dismissal from service and untimely deaths. Till late eighties and early nineties there was no bar on filling up these vacancies through direct recruitment or promotions following the due procedure. However, from middle of nineties there was almost ban on filling up vacancies through direct recruitment citing economy measures. This further aggravated the burden of protection on the Forest Guard. As at many a places, the FG was given additional charge of another Beat; doubling his responsibility without any kind of support.

Under these circumstances, it is incumbent to look at the challenges faced by the Forest Guard! The FG was neither omnipresent nor omnipotent, yet he was supposed to be responsible for the protection of forests under his charge 24 hours a day; throughout the year. Not only this he was also entrusted with the responsibility of taking care of a nursery or two in his jurisdiction, of raising & maintenance of plantations in time (if these were there), taking accused persons to the Courts, Beedi Leaf work in the BL season and of course protocol duties. As a result, there was no possibility of focus on protection of forests.

This was the real challenge. And who all were his adversaries? The so-called poor people of the villages (including Tribals & other “weaker sections of the society”) who were dependent on the adjacent

forests for firewood, poles, timber and small timber for agricultural implements and housing purposes. Besides they were also involved in the encroachment of forest lands. In addition, there were commercial smugglers, poachers, and Naxalites.

For most of the Forest Guards there were no official residential accommodation. They were forced to live in rented accommodation. In many a cases, they were dependent on the Gram Sarpanch for this as well. Without Sarpanch's nod, nobody used to give a house or hut on rent to the FG; mostly not available. Only a Sarpanch or some big Landlord only had big houses; a portion of which could be rented out. Hence the FG was obliged to return the favour – by ignoring illegal felling and/or poaching. In certain cases, the Forest Guard was entitled to “Nagal Patti” a sort of consideration (in kind, like food grains etc.) in lieu of permitting the village folk to “illegally” collect timber for hutting/housing purpose & poles and small timber for agricultural implements. The villagers considered collection of firewood as their hereditary right, hence no question of booking offence cases for this by the FG. The Govt. had made grazing free for one year in 1968 or so, for a period of one year in view of the prevailing drought situation. However, it became permanent concession though the Govt. had not formally extended this concession. The only exception was made in case of browsing by Goats. And wherever the Quarters were available, either were in bad shape due to lack of maintenance or were being maintained by the Forest Guards on their own. As it is, in the absence of the Schools/Colleges in the interior forest areas coupled with poorly maintained fair weather roads, the FGs were required to maintain two establishments: making their lives more difficult.

In addition to this, they were required to contribute to the “Hospitality Fund” at the Range Level. Till 1989 the salary used to be disbursed to them by the FROs in cash. The FROs used to deduct this “contribution” and pay only the Net Salary to the FGs. In one case the FRO obtained signatures of the FGs on the Hand Receipts in token of receipt of the full salary and paid NOTHING. The annual event of writing the ACRs of the FGs & Foresters had turned out to be a mockery. It had, by and large became subjective. It did not remain

objective reflecting the true aptitude & performance of the person. Their measure of efficiency was something else! Even, some of the senior Officers in the rank of CCF used to comment that his FGs, Foresters etc. did not need any salary, they could manage without it as well. Very unfortunate!

It had been advocated at various forums that the Forests should not be considered as a source of Revenue to the Government but as "Service provider", Nonetheless Govt. used to fix "Targets" for realization of Revenue. Not only this, the release of budget was linked to the realization of Revenue. This approach was totally unjustified, as funds required for the protection as well as scientific management of forests as per the prescription of the Working Plans and that of Protected areas as per Management Plans were never provided. In fact, CCF/PCCF (HoD) was discouraged to put up the realistic demand. In one instance where I was present, the Finance Secretary had threatened not to provide any Budget to the Forest Department if PCCF insisted for providing more budget than proposed by the Finance Department. In another case when PCCF requested for lifting the ban on recruitment to fill up the existing vacancies in the cadres of protective staff, the Chief Secretary retorted by saying that he would wind up the Forest Department as at that time "people were protecting the forests under Joint Forest Management". However, that proved to be a mere threat to silence the demand for filling up the vacant posts, which were substantial (around 30%). This proved to be detrimental to the forests and wildlife in the State. As a result, vacancies continued as well as the unrealistic targets. Targets in respect of "Collection of C' Fee (Compounding Fee) and Goat browsing fee were descended up to Beat level for the FGs.

In addition to above, there were external factors acting as hindrance in the discharge of the legitimate duties by the Protection staff. Prominent among those was the threat from the Naxalites/Left wing extremists, besides from the smuggling dons, hunters and poachers. Number of Foresters have been humiliated or manhandled for having booked offence cases and/or having collected Compounding Fee or for conducting raid. In certain cases, they have been assaulted or even

killed. In AP (combined State) even senior Officers like the Conservator of Forests, Distt. Collector, DFO, Sub-DFO too had humiliating experience at the hands of LW Extremists. I know in few cases, the Foresters had to "refund" the Compounding Fee to the Offenders. Large scale deforestation took place at the behest of Extremists.

Under the circumstances mentioned above, the Forest Guard was hard pressed to perform his duties without arms, without means of mobility, lack of communication and lack of back up support. And most of the FG's morale at the lowest ebb with numerous Charge Sheets pending against him and the chances of promotion bleak. With such a scenario, how could one give the best? In my view, this was the trigger point of a vicious cycle of suppression of facts and many other irregularities on the part of protective staff. These could be enlisted as: a. Not reporting the destruction of forests, to the extent possible; b. Under reporting the magnitude of destruction by under valuing the "missing material" and over valuing the "present material", to minimize the liability, c. Suppressing the incidents of encroachments & in some cases abetting it, d. Misappropriation of C' Fee (Collect more, put less on record) and e. In the worst scenario conniving with the smugglers & encroachers. And f. Writing up of false diaries.

In the State of AP some efforts were made to improve the working conditions. In the early eighties Wireless communication system coupled with Mobile Squads, was introduced in 4 Divisions of Warangal Circle and 1 Division (Kothagudem) of Khammam Circle. Rest of the Circles were covered with Wireless connectivity in the nineties. This had improved the communication to certain extent, but the position of the FG remained as such. No respite for him. The newly sanctioned Mobile Squads also starting functioning as Flying Squad Parties, with target driven approach as they were also required to realize targets of booking cases and collecting C' Fee. They hardly provided any help to the Forest Guards in preventing the destruction of forests.

A team of Senior Officers was sent to Kerala in 1994 to study the concept of "Forest Stations" implemented

there. These Stations were akin to Police Stations, where anyone could walk in and inform or lodge complaint regarding damages to the Forests. All the Forest Guards of a Section were stationed at this station along with the Section Officer. Good buildings were constructed for the Forest Stations, Vehicle provided to the Station, but the Beat System was dispensed with. As a result, there was no accountability for the damages to the forests. Forest Guards and Foresters were happy; only the Forests were at a loss- as there was no one to speak for them. The destruction continued unabated.

Sri AH Moosvi, PCCF had constituted a Committee in June 1994 to examine the Forest Protection problem and come up with the recommendations to improve the same. The Committee moved around the State, held discussions with the Field level protective staff, officers as well as the stake holders and gave its recommendations covering all the aspects of forest protection. It had also recommended to go in for Forest Station concept of Kerala, but without abolishing the Beat System. The Forest Stations (in fact Mobile Squads) were thought of as additional/extra support to the frontline staff. It had recommended for marginal increase in the number of protective staff. Many good recommendations were made, but alas, his successor Sri C.N. Rao, IFS had consigned this report to the dustbin condemning it as totally useless document!

In Teak-forest rich Circle Adilabad, with a view to provide support of the Police Force to the needy Forest Officers & staff to combat with smugglers and poachers, an Officer of the DIG rank was created to coordinate between the local Police & Forest Officers in the nineties. But this experiment also proved to be ineffective and hence later given up.

Another Team was sent to study the forest protection mechanism in the States of Maharashtra, MP & Chhattisgarh by the PCCF in 2008. There were no special provisions for the protection of forests; Beat system was in place. However, the FDs were found to be lenient in fixing up the responsibility for the destruction. Therefore, in these States, the protective staff did not face as much heat of punitive action as faced by their counter parts in AP.

Any proposal by the Forest Department for increasing the number of protective staff was rebuffed by the Govt., mainly Finance Secretaries. In fact, Govt. had constituted a committee to weed out the unnecessary posts in all the Departments based on "Work-Time study" and this Committee (consisting of IAS Officers) had recommended for reduction in the number of posts in FD across the table.

Once the Chief Minister Sri N. Chandra Babu Naidu had held a meeting with the Forest Officers at the MCRHRD Institute of AP. In this meeting once again the issue of filling up of vacant posts came up. The CM was convinced about filling up the vacant posts by lifting ban on recruitment. However, the Finance Secretary was not in favour of lifting the ban. He instead suggested to engage the Forest Guards on contract basis as an economy measure, stating that two or more persons could be engaged in the salary of a Forest Guard. When it was countered with the logic that the FG holds a statutory position which cannot be given to a contractual person, the FS did not press for it. But refused to agree to lift the ban on recruitment per se. Later, recruitment of ST persons was permitted in a phased manner, but it fell far short of the vacancies.

World Bank aided AP Forestry Project as well as AP Community Forest Management Project did not support extra manpower. In the mean-time biotic pressure on the forests kept increasing and hence the pressure of work on the FG. He was unable to cope up with the increased pressure. Initially there was blanket ban on the recruitment of persons for forest protection in the CAMPA. But later permission was granted to set up Base Camps in the interior forest area, by engaging Tribal Helpers. This measure had really was of real help and support to the Forest Guards. But again in 2020 it was withdrawn. So, the Forest Department came to the square one!

In the meanwhile, the problems of the Forest Department had been compounded due to enactment of Forest Rights Act in 2006 & Rules in 2007. Not only the Act suffered from anomalies, the implementation was faulty and lead to un precedented encroachments. By now the working conditions had become very bad. Women

were also recruited as Forest Guards, Foresters & FROs. One can easily imagine the plight of the women Forest Guards to effectively protect the forests without required support in unfavorable conditions.

Again in 2009 an attempt was made by the then PCCF & HoFF Sri C. Siva Shankar Reddy, IFS to strengthen the forest protection machinery by reducing the area of a Beat to an average of 15 Sq. Km. from the average of 25 Sq. Km. and proportionately the area of Sections & Ranges. Besides providing an assistant to each of the Forest Guard (renamed as Forest Beat Officer in AP) to be known as Asst. Beat Officer. Besides it was proposed to provide a Strike Force of about 10 persons (headed by a Forester & consisting of 4 FBOs & 5 ABOs) at each of the 100 identified vulnerable Ranges with a vehicle and arms. However, the Department did not succeed in getting the scheme approved.

Finally, this proposal was revived once again in 2013 by Sri BSS Reddy, IFS, PCCF & HoFF. It was preceded by a 2 days Conference of the Forest Officers of AP, which was inaugurated by the Chief Minister Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy. Honorable Governor of AP Shri E.S.L. Narsimhan gave the valedictory address. This conference had prepared the favourable ground for the Department. Both the heads had commended the task performed by the forest officers. The CM had commented in a lighter vein that the Forest Officers are generally not given their due and that the Forest Officers rarely ask for anything for themselves. He had considered illegal felling of trees to be more heinous crime than committing a murder & therefore emphasized on the need to protect the forest by all means.

With this kind of background, personal rapport and gift of gab coupled with sincere and effective presentation Sri BSS Reddy, IFS, PCCF & HoFF, succeeded in getting the Scheme of strengthening of the Forest Department approved in the Govt. In all 3820 additional posts of protective Officers (1500 ABOs, 1600 FBOs, 600 Foresters & 120 FROs) and staff had been sanctioned, to be recruited in 3 Financial years commencing from 2013-14. It was a wonderful news and joyous moment in the history of the Department.

It was the sweet culmination of a struggle of more than two decades. A very big thanks to the then CM Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy and thumbs up to the then PCCF & HoFF Sri BSS Reddy, IFS!

Without losing time all that was needed to be done to recruit the newly sanctioned posts; like working out the numbers Circle, Division, Range wise and arriving at the numbers category wise; bringing out necessary amendments to the Service Rules making provision for Sportspersons, NCC cadets etc. was done quickly. The written examination was also conducted by involving the Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (JNTU). But the results could not be announced as the Model Code of Conduct had come into force in view of the General Elections in May 2014. Again, in view of the proposed bifurcation of the State on 2nd of June 2014, both the State Governments did not approve of the further proceedings based on the examination conducted in the combined State of AP.

What a terrible end to the efforts of more than two decades. But for the enforcement of the model code of conduct and later the bifurcation of the State into two States with carving out of the 29th State of Telangana on 2nd June 2014, the long awaited and much needed revamping of the Forest Department would have materialized in June 2014 for sure. This would have seen every Forest Guard (FBO in Telugu States) in the Beat assisted by a Forest Watcher (ABO) and there would have been a 10-person strong Strike Force at each of the vulnerable Range HQ with arms and vehicle. This would have definitely strengthened the protection of forests and wildlife. Alas! This did not happen.

Subsequently, when the Telangana Govt. gave permission to go ahead with the filling up of newly sanctioned posts in 2017; the new dispensation had reorganized the Units in their own way without going into the history of "struggle" to get the additional person power sanctioned. The new dispensation had done away with the posts of Forest Watchers (Asst. Beat Officers) and converted all the posts of ABOs into that of the Forest Guards (Forest Beat Offices). The posts meant for Strike Forces have also been utilized for the newly created Beats, Sections and Ranges. No doubt,

the jurisdiction of each functionary has been reduced, but everyone had gone back to square one; status quo ante restored in so far it comes to the functioning of the Forest Guards. He/She must function alone, as was the case earlier, no support of any kind of Force in case of need. What a tragedy! All the efforts of two decades gone in vain.

When we look at the structure of Police Organizations in the States and Centre and Armed Forces; there have been expansion keeping in view the circumstances and need of the hour leading to specialization – different set up to deal with different kinds of problems. For example, Rapid Action Force (RAF) deals with communal disturbances, Grey Hound deals with LW Extremists, Anti-Corruption Bureau deals with corruption, Narcotics Bureau with offences linked to misuse of Narcotics, SHE teams are concerned with safety of women; and Border Security Force, ITBP,

Sashakt Suraksha Bal (SSB) for the security of our frontiers in different locations, Coast Guard to protect our seacoast and so on.

Whereas in the Telangana, whatever little specialization existed, has vanished now. There is total lack of specialized wings. Earlier in Telangana, like in many other States, there used to be three major wings, viz., Territorial, Wildlife and Social Forestry. However, now there is only one wing – territorial. This has further compounded the burden on the lone Forest Guard (FBO) - with multiple tasking of the FG; lone sufferer will be natural forests. In my view this does not augur well for the protection of forests and wildlife in the State. There is a strong case for the review of the existing set up. Earlier it is done, the better; both for the forests as well as the protective staff! Till then one can only pray God to take care of the forests & wildlife in Telangana.

(The author is former PCCF & HoFF, Telangana and can be reached on mobile at +91 6300030519 and e-mail at pareshvyas22@gmail.com).

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- EDITOR

We produce black - But our views are Green



Cultivation near Reclaimed Dump



Settling pond / Summer storage tank

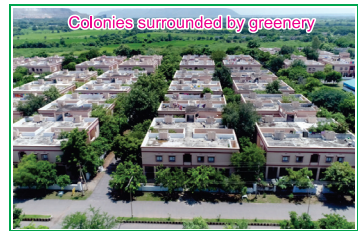


Eco-Friendly Park



Award in recognition of eco-friendly measures

- Pollution control and Soil Conservation Measures.
- About 5.50 crore saplings were planted in Singareni spread over area.
- Artificial forest covers to OC Dumps.
- Avenue plantation in colonies and roads.
- Eco-friendly parks developed in colonies.
- Sand manufactured from OB.
- STP/ ETP at all Colonies / Establishments.
- Efforts of Singareni were rewarded by State and National level awards.



Colonies surrounded by greenery



Reclaimed OB Dump



THE SINGARENI COLLIERIES COMPANY LIMITED

(A Government Company)

INAUGURATION OF TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR 31st BATCH FOREST BEAT OFFICERS ON 08.04.2022
Telangana State Forest Academy, Dulapally, Hyderabad. (Report on Page:54)



XXI All India FRC Meet Kurnool , Andhra Pradesh from 21-03-2022 to 24-03-2022 (Page:55)



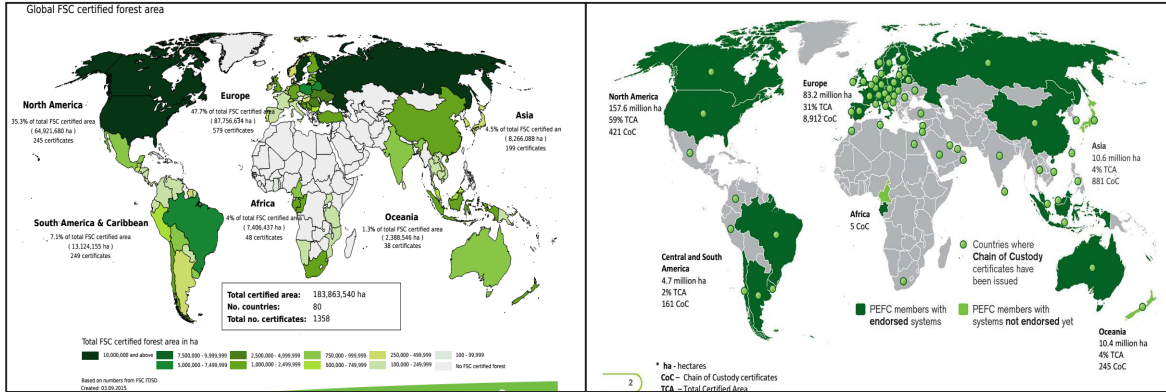
Participants pose for a group photo at Nagara Vanam, Kurnool



Visit to Mahanadi Temple



Sri K. Sudhakar Reddy and Sri Y. Rajendra, organizers being felicitated for the memorable meet



Global FSC Certified Forest Area (Article on Page:37)

Forest Certification-Functioning of GFTN

**General Body Meeting of the Association of Retired Forest Officers of
Telangana and Andhra Pradesh (Details on Page:8)
Felicitations during 95th General Body Meet.**



General Body Meet in progress



Dr K. Tulasi Rao



Sri K. Buchi Ram Reddy, IFS (R)



Sri R.M. Dobrial, IFS PCCF (HOFF)
CWLW (FAC), Telangana.



Sri S.D. Mukharji, IFS (R)



Sri N. Linganna, IFS (R)



Sri N. Padmanabha Reddy, IFS (R)



Sri Y. Ram Mohan Rao, IFS (R)



Sri K. Krishna Bhupal Rao, IFS (R)



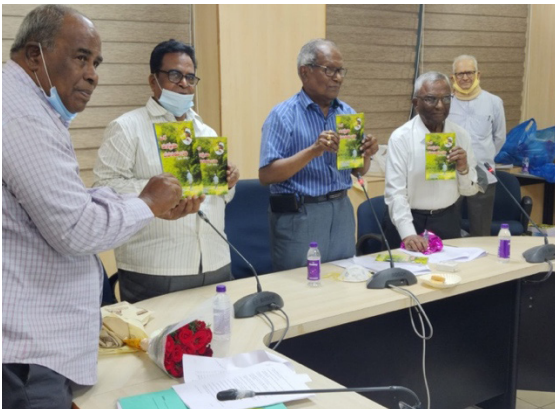
Sri K. Murali Krishna Rao



Sri A.V. Govindarajulu



Sri V.V. Rajam



Release of "Oka Vanapremi Jeevanayam" -Autobiography by Sri K. Buchi Ram Reddy, IFS (R)



Address by Sri R.M. Dobrial, IFS PCCF (HOFF) CWLW (FAC), Telangana.



From the newly elected body: Sri Mohd. Thayyab, Editor, VanaPremi, Sri P.K. Jha, IFS (Retd.), President, Sri G. Krishnamurthy, Vice President and Sri B.M. Swami Das, Secretary

POETRY - MY LOVE

S.K. Das, IFS (Retd.)



*I love poetry
But I'm somewhat embarrassed to own it.
My first acquaintance with poetry
Dates back to "waterfalls and leaves are swayed by air"
I could never forget the bygone days
As I'm immersed in work throughout the day
I also keep on hearing the magical tunes of poetry*

*I swim in a sea of sadness
As I leave the city and tread on rustic paths.
I look up at the flying kite
In a state of forgetfulness of the sorrows of the mankind
Swept by the wings of the imagination
I roam from the green riverside to the gurgling fountain
Descending from the hills*

*Once it was my only aim-
I would be a crusader on behalf of
The downtrodden, the meek and the dumb
And light up their lives
I would ensure eternal peace for all
By clearing all garbage from the face of this earth
But I could not do any of these.*

*Now I crave for belonging
To the imaginary world of poetry
And I desire for my niche
In my happy household
I beseech pardon from all of you
For my inability, my incapacity to turn the world
Into a desired place to live in.*

(The poet is former Prl CCF and HoFF, Andhra Pradesh and the poem is taken from his collection of poems 'Kabitake Bhalobeshe -Poetry-My Love' translated by Ms Chandana Khan, IAS (Retd.). Feedback -Mobile: +919550681964)



Technique of High-Density Plantations for Dry Zone

B.M.T. Rajeev, IFS (Retd.)

There was an allegation by the Hon'ble MLA/Ex-Speaker-Sri K R Ramesh Kumar in the Karnataka Legislative Assembly on 22.03.2022 and it was appeared in the Deccan Herald on 23.3.2022 at page no.6.

The allegation looks serious against the credibility of the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) in the eyes of the public. The KFD has a duty to give explanation against the allegations about-failure of the plantations alleged to have been raised in 2019, 2020 & 2021 rains by spending Rs 700 crores in the dry districts of the state and Rs 200 Crores in Kolar district (his home dist.) alone.

Leaving the allegations... If one analyses the present procedure in the KFD; raising successful plantations with assured funds, workable SSR with right technique in this era of mechanization in the 2020s is not a problem for the team of concerned officers from ACF to down below if the team works without complacency. If complacency is found, it has to be broken by the concerned DCF & CCFs; if not the allegations of the Hon'ble MLA may sound right in some cases.

Now, the KFD is in dearth of areas for compensatory plantations in lieu of forests/trees lost for development projects. The KFD finds it difficult to re-clothe the degraded forests due to anthropological pressure in the borders of the recorded forests (RFs) as such blocks are encroached by the landless farmers... and it is difficult to evict such encroachments due to political interferences by projecting humanitarian grounds against Foresters. The activity of artificial regeneration of forests with plantations is limited 80% since 20% of the RFs are under the net work of Protected Areas in the state and to unfavorable rocky and fallow open forests in the dry zones.

The task of raising successful plantations in the dry tracks of the state lies in the technique of planting of

local species of trees other than Eucalyptus and the Acacia auriculiformis as they have been banned in Karnataka. Here lies the secret to see that achievement of successful plantation in the plains in the midst of Global warming(GW) and Climate Changes(CC)'s havoc is not an easy proposition...for which mechanized high density plantation seems to be appropriate in the present scenario of conserve rain water for the benefit of the biodiversity.

Technique of Mechanized High Density Plantation

(MHDP): It is a Trench & Mound (TM) model of plantation with higher size trenches along the contour lines with staggered TMs to catch and hold the rain water within the plantations like in the farm lands.

The technique: Size of the trenches 4.00- M X 1.00M x 1.00 M = 4.00M³

Espacement of trenches in rows at 5 M apart from center to center of the rows with 1.00M septa between trenches along the contour which works out to 400 trenches per ha and 1,600 M³ of earth work per ha. Alignment should be strictly on contours by using a template to begin with from the centre.

The digging of trenches by JCB only since it is very difficult to have the one M depth trenches manually. The dug up soil of trenches has to be put at... the top soil from 20 cm depth to the upstream side(U/s) and rest in the D/s side as a continuous mound and leave for weathering.

Formation of TM-After weathering the U/s side edge of the trench to be cut in to the trench for 30 cms width triangle...and the topsoil heaped at U/s of the trench to be dragged in to the trench to serve as cushion for planting seedlings-(it forms only top soil). The excavated earth heaped at D/s to be formed into continuous mound by closing the septa between trenches.

Planting: Plant good quality and graded seedlings @ 5 plants per trench at 1.00 m apart inside/ in the center of the trench ...This will make the planting a continuous line of plants at 1 .00 m apart and works out to 2,000 trees per ha. The bamboo can be preferred in trenches @ one per trench in favourable edaphic conditions. Further plant 5 plants of Pongamia/ Terminalia balarica/ Holeptolia intigrifolia/ Simarouba glauca etc on the mound of TMs in addition to sowing of seeds of Sandal, Ac. nilotica, Neem and grasses on the mound-it will work out to another 2,000 plants per ha plus the seed origin plants say about 1000 per ha. In total it projects 5,000 plants per ha. It will be equal to 50% of the minimum density of Japan's Miyawaki technique which prescribes 10,000 to 40,000 trees per ha.

Inputs:

There should be provision for fertilizer application @ 10-5 grams of NP/urea plus 10-15 grams of Neem cake per plant in the first year. The casualty replacement with tall seedlings with fertilizer to ensure cent percent stock with maintenance for 3 years and protection for 5 years.

Soil & Moisture Conservation (SMC):

Because of GW & CC causing scarcity of potable water more emphasis is being given to rain water harvesting. The 4 .00 M3 trenches will have the capacity of 5 M3 to 6 M3 water holding capacity due to

continuous mound at D/s side to catch the water from the catchment of 5Mx5M by intercepting all the rains into it intermittently up to a capacity of 2,000 M3 per ha per rain. It will recharge the underground water table like a SMC structure and provide sufficient moisture and top soil for the plants for many years or for the lifetime of the plantation. This technique will ensure the survival of all plants with boost for existing root stock and the grasses...for which govts spend huge costs under watershed programs. These techniques of rain water harvesting improve the farming in the D/s area with improved water table, surface water sources & soil moisture.

References:

This technique is suggested with personal experience in WSDP in Nelamangala during 1990-92. The success of Bamboo planted inside the cattle proof trenches in the 1990s by Sri PC Pondey,CF, Banagalore can be seen now in Tumkur T.Dvn. My experience in the SF Tumakuru for roadside plantations with big size trenches which yielded good result/growth(2004-06). It is learnt that the SF,Chitradurga too did this technique and got very good results in 2015 (Sri Manjunath DCF Retd). And my experience in MHDPs in the KFDC Chikmagalur and Hassan districts during 1996-2000 in raising successful plantations.

(The Author belongs to Karnataka cadre and freelance

writer on Wildlife, Forestry & Environment. He can be contacted over mobile: +919632781811 and email: bmt.rajeev.ifs@gmail.com)

“Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I’m not sure about the universe.”

- Albert Einstein

☆☆☆

“Anyone who thinks sitting in church can make you a Christian must also think that sitting in a garage can make you a car.”

- Garrison Keillor



Green Quiz - MAY 2022

Quiz Master: Dr. K. Tirupataiah, IFS (Retd.)

(Quiz Master is the Defending Champion of the QUIZ competition held as part of All India Forest Sports Meet at Raipur, Chattisgarh, January 2019)

(Focus of This month's Quiz is Animal Records)

1. Which Bird can dive as fast as an F1 race Car (in excess of 300 kmph)?
2. Which is called the "Sulphur bottom" whale?
3. Which is the largest living Butterfly?
4. Which is the Largest land Carnivore?
5. Which is the Biggest Fish in the Ocean?
6. Which is the Largest Reptile?
7. Which is the Largest Bivalve Mollusk?
8. Which living Bird's eggs are the Biggest in the World?
9. Which word means Unwanted Burden in English? It is cloned from the name of a Sea Bird.
10. Which is the Largest Snake in the World?
11. Which is the Largest Rodent in the World?
12. Which is the Largest Amphibian in the World?
13. Which is the Largest Living Lizard in the World?
14. Which is the Largest Living Gorilla?
15. Which is the Largest Marsupial in the World?

(Answers on page: 44)

Note:- Contributions are invited from member/readers. Select questions (with answers) would be published in this article along with those from Quiz Master. Questions with answers may be mailed to kota_86@rediffmail.com.

(The Quiz Master presently works part-time as Chief Consultant (Trg.) at Dr MCR HRD Institute of Telangana)

*“Common sense is like deodorant.
The people who need it most never use it.”*

—Anonymous

Continuation from page No.16

level will prevail and lead to formulation of right kind of policy reforms and interventions to take forward and boost the growth of Agroforestry and development of Private forestry with a balanced focus on environment

improvement, economic development, farmers' welfare, poverty alleviation, employment generation and overall wellbeing of the society and nation.

(NB: The views expressed are personal)

(The author is former Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force) Andhra Pradesh and can be reached over mobile: +919989171958 and by email: pmkrao72@gmail.com).

Forest Certification

Dr G. Ramalingam, IFS.,



(Continued from previous issue)

FOREST CERTIFICATION AGENCIES

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (FSC)

- An independent, non-governmental, not for profit organization guided by its multi-stakeholder membership.
- Founded in 1993 after the 1992 UN Conference on Sustainable Development, by concerned business representatives, social groups, and environmental organizations to promote: environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.
- Also acts as an international non-governmental umbrella organization to accredit nationally based forest certifying bodies.

WHO ARE FSC's MEMBERS?

- A wide range of social, community and indigenous people's groups responsible corporations, developmental agencies and other public organizations
- Environmental organizations such as WWF, green peace and friends of the earth and responsible companies such as IKEA, home depot etc.
- Support of a large and growing number of companies, who have united themselves in various countries into 'buyers groups'.

HOW FSC OPERATES

- Through consultative processes, it sets international standards for responsible forest management.
- FSC undertakes market in programs and information services that contributes to the mission of promoting responsible forestry worldwide.

- It accredits independent third party organizations who can certify forest managers and forest product producers to FSC standards.

FSC -10 Principles

1. Comply with international, national and local laws and FSC Principles,
2. Respect tenure & use rights and responsibilities,
3. Protect Indigenous Peoples' rights,
4. Assure community benefits and worker's rights,
5. Generate multiple benefits from the forest,
6. Manage and limit environmental impact,
7. Compile and follow a management plan,
8. Monitor and assess forest management impact,
9. Maintain High Conservation Value forests,
10. Ensure that plantations comply with FSC principles.

The Process of FSC Certification Assessment

- Apply from forest manager to CB for assessment
- Pre-assessment, signing and then adequate assessment member selection
- Collect data, and analyze by assessors
- Public comments from local and related people
- Evaluation
- Write report and submit to forest managers to check
- Check the report by peer reviewers
- Concrete the report and submit from CB to FSC and request certification
- Issue certification, summery report publication
- Annual audits and re-assessment after 5 years

Asia	Total area (ha)	No.
CAMBODIA	12,746	1
CHINA	1,190,453	63
INDIA	818,466	12
INDONESIA	2,110,925	30
JAPAN	392,920	34
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF	384,216	9
LAOS	132,702	3
MALAYSIA	673,334	12
SRI LANKA	14,458	3
TAIWAN	212	1
THAILAND	44,237	12
TURKEY	2,359,473	8
VIETNAM	131,947	11
Grand total	8,266,088	199

PROGRAM FOR ENDORSEMENT OF FOREST CERTIFICATION SCHEMES (PEFC)

- Founded during 1999 in Paris, an umbrella organization which facilitates mutual recognition among the numerous national certification standards.
- Assesses the various certification processes against the standards defined by the PEFC.
- Timbers from forests certified under an accredited national process entitled to carry the PEFC label

Global Forest & Trade Network - GTFN is WWF's initiative to improve the management of valuable and threatened forests. GTFN is the affiliation of national and regional forest & trade networks. It is active in nearly 30 producer and consumer nations in Europe, Africa, the Americas and Asia.

GTFN operates by:

- Eliminating illegal logging
- Facilitating trade links between companies committed to achieve & support responsible forestry
- Creating market conditions that help conserve the world's forests while providing economic and social benefits for the business & people that depend on them.

FORSET CERTIFICATION IN INDIA

Government Initiatives:

- Constituted Forest Certification Committee (Chair: Dr Maharaj Muthoo) by MoEF

- Report submitted in Sept 2010 with recommendation to establish Indian Forest Certification Council (IFCC).
- Stake holder consultations in 2011 and preparation of a frame work completed
- IFCC was likely to be established with the financial support from MOEF (2012/2013). But yet to be established.

Status of India's forests:

Recorded forest area: 76.52 million ha (23.28% of total geographic area)

Ownership:

- Forest department: 92.47 %
- Other govt. departments: 3.18%
- Corporate bodies: 2.45 %
- Others: 1.9 %

Looking at the development of global scenario - it has become imperative to have a national policy on 'certification'. Being custodians, State forest departments have taken lead in getting the forests certified.

Bhopal-India process: evolved criteria & indicators for SFM but they are yet to be implemented at the National level

Efforts by Handicraft office (Ministry of Textiles)

Funding FSC Certification for

State	Area (ha)	Species
Uttarakhand	5000	Shisham
Madhya Pradesh	165	Teak
Chattisgarh	5500	Sal
Himachal Pradesh	500	Bamboo
Tripura (pvt.)	10	Bamboo
Mizoram (pvt.)	120	Teak

The ministry of environment and forests has constituted a national governing body to frame the policy guidelines on certification of timber and NTFPS etc.

- Committee for certification criteria
- Committee for certification processes

- Committee for accreditation criteria and processes MOEF is in the process of finalizing terms of reference for the composition & functioning of the following three separate expert committees

Indian Scenario of FSC Certification:

- Certified Forest area in India is around 8, 11,815 lakh Ha.
- Around 400 Chain of Custody certificates issued.
- Only FSC is present in India through various operating Certification bodies.
- Market is growing every day.
- Some of the Forest certified Entities are - U.P. Forest Corporation, Bhamraragh Forest Division in Maharashtra, Tripura Forest Development and Plantation Corporation (TFDPCL) in government sectors and others in private sectors

Some of the Forest Certified Entities in India:

Sl. No.	Agency/Institution	Area
1	Uttar Pradesh Forest Development Corporation – FSC	3.49 lakh Ha
2	Tripura Forest Development and Plantation Corporation (TFDPCL) - FSC	7027 Ha
3	Bhamraragh Forest Division in Maharashtra FSC	3.67 lakh Ha
4	International Papers APPM, FSC	28,265 Ha
5	Society for Afforestation, Research and Allied Works, FSC	15,091 Ha
6	JK Paper Mills, Rayagada Unit, FSC	2616 Ha
7	Kasu Brahmananda Reddy National park, FSC	142 Ha

Issues in Forest Certification

- Slow adoption in developing countries

(Concluded)

(The author is Chief Conservator of Forests, Adilabad Circle, Telangana State and can be reached over mobile: and email: gamineniramalingam66@gmail.com).

- Market access to certified products depends on volume
- Cost of certification
- Require man power
- Land tenure issues and compliance to various international standards

Benefits from Forest Certification

- Improve forest management, and enhance multiple values from forest
- Challenge policy/legal frameworks and improve government roles
- Reduce government's forest monitoring burdens, by bringing in independent certifiers
- Improve mechanisms for producer accountability
- Maintain or improve market access/share
- Obtain a price premium for certified products
- Obtain or defend the producer's access to forests, resources, and capital
- Reduce the producer's environmental and social risk
- Improve the awareness, skills, or morale of staff and stakeholders

Features of Certified Products Market

- Consumers are interested in products of its quality certified.
- Consumers are not so interested in products of its production procedure certified.
- Most of the companies use and re-use paper; to appeal they are environmentally friendly.
- For individual consumers, certification is one of the factors to select goods. If the certification has something to do with quality and/or safety, some consumers are likely to select.
- Many companies prefer certified materials, partly because to appeal ECO, and partly because to avoid environmental risks.



Why March 2022 is Unusually Hot in India?

Dr. Uma Shanker Singh, IFS(R), DSc

India has been witnessing the hottest March in the last 122 years ever since the mankind has started keeping records, 1901. The unseasonal heatwave across north and central India has made many of us indoor therefore, impacting the economy. The data released by the Indian meteorological department (IMD) shows that the average temperature during March was 33.1°C which broke its own record of 33.09°C in the month of March 2010. The climate has become very harsh and has impacted wheat productivity in India, the magnitude of its impact is yet to be assessed by government of India. What are the reasons for this abrupt change in the climate change? Apparently, there are four reasons attributed for the shift in the rise of temperature in the early months of March 2022 compared to previous years and they are:

- 1 The anti-cyclonic circulation has continued to persist therefore, the high pressure zone will maintain its presence in plains of north India and this will make weather conditions over the northern most dry and hot.
2. The western disturbances which bring in rain during the month of March has been weakened considerably in intensity and strength. Western disturbances usually continuous with moderate intensity until mid-March and sometimes and until end of March also. But since 4th March 2022 we have not seen any significant Western disturbance approaching Western Himalayas.
3. The reason behind early heat waves, early depressions and the weird dust storms is the continued persistence of a north-south low pressure pattern that forms over India during winters when a La Niña phenomenon is occurring in the equatorial Pacific Ocean.
4. The Antarctica has been severely hot this time. On 18th March 2022, the surface air temperature along

eastern Antarctica was historically high and recorded to be 40°C above normal. Let me remind you that Antarctica is relatively, undisturbed compared to Arctic region and normally, the temperatures around this time of the year remains in the range of minus 45°C to minus 50°C. However, the Antarctica witnessed a temperature between minus 18°C and minus 12°C, which is by any stretch of imagination unprecedented.

REDUCED RAINFALL AND HIGH TEMPERATURE IN THE MONTH OF MARCH 2022

The impact of reduced western disturbances could be seen in the reduced rainfall in almost entire northern India in the month of March 2022 and this probably reminds us of situation way back in 2019 when India was bereft of pre-monsoon rains. The data released by IMD for the month of March 2022 shows that large swathes of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and North East India have received no rain at all in the month of March 2022. The hills have also received 'Deficient' or 'Large Deficient' rains. Districts such as Poonch (a departure of -23 per cent), Leh (-49%), Tehri Garhwal (-48%), West Sikkim (-56%), South Sikkim (-33%), East Kameng (-38%) and East Siang (-35%) recorded 'deficient' rainfall in the hills. Baramulla (a departure of -17%), Nainital (-12%), North Sikkim (-8%), East Sikkim (-10%), Tawang (1%), Papum Pare (-12%) and Upper Siang (-15%) recorded 'normal' rainfall in the hills. If the corresponding figures of temperature rise is seen as per the data available for a period between 27th March and 2nd April 2022, maximum temperature was recorded above 40°C in various stations of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Telangana, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi. Last week, Chandrapur from Maharashtra, with 44.2°C maximum temperature on 30 March, was the hottest place in the country.

(The writer is former PCCF, UP and a prolific writer. He is currently guiding many PhD students in Ranchi university. Feedback: mobile:9450877777 and email: umashankar.87@gmail.com)

Unique Non-Users of Mobile Phones!

Dr. B. Ragotham Rao Desai, IFS (Retd.)



In good humour:

Variety's the very spice of life that gives it all its flavour. 'Knowledge' is proved that they have learned so much, 'wisdom' is humble that they know not more o solitude! Where are the charms that sages have seen in the face? Knowledge dwells in heads replete with thought of other men; wisdom in minds attentive to their own.

- William Cowper (1731-1800)

(English poet & hymnodist, who changed the direction of

18th century nature poetry by writing everyday life & scenes of the English countryside.

I had been intensely bonding with innumerable friends and relatives for years, but none can be equated with the three among them, viz., my brother (at Hyderabad), my cousin (at Secunderabad) and a senior colleague (at Bengaluru), who still wholly depend upon BSNL landline telephones with whom they seem to have developed delightful bonds perhaps due to the fact they had been dutiful with them for decades!

It may sound staggering, but they never owned a cellphone to date, but heavily rely upon the demure & docile landline telephones (with dollops of dignity) for all of their human interactions----despite possibility of problems such as behaving like a truculent (or aggressively defiant) brat, tenaciously and tirelessly throwing terrible temper tantrums, admitting that it is not always they behave in such an awful manner, but they could be amiable at times! Yes, the instruments' behaviours being dictated by their dreadful capricious moods--for instance: when there is a tinkle from someone, the set trills with such terrifying sound, audible enough even if they are ambling outside their respective abodes' entrance gates. But if they happen to be in their foul mood, their ring turns so feeble that even if they are beside them, they might miss picking up the calls!

True that not many senior citizens can download a computerised statement, own a printer, remember so many passwords and have a laptop they can operate

without help----India, in particular having the dubious distinction of having the highest number of people without the internet, despite having the second largest online market in the world! It means that over 50% of the country's people don't have internet access----making it incumbent upon the policymakers to be considerate towards the elderly, poor and disabled amid the going digitisation fad by not making them run around for basic things.

At times it may not be surprising if they exhibited an uncanny knack for donning unexpected avatars, they are being so whimsical anyway--like if they are having an informal talk with their close friends, the telephone sets try to foil their fun by intercepting & inserting some other chats (on the other lines) such that they keep hearing multiple voices (along with ours). Disgusted during such times they might have slammed the receivers down, causing the instruments sulk, sham to be sick and silent----to spring back suddenly after several days! At times again they could also act like horrendous harridans (or bosses) --as an instance, when their sons or close relatives are trying to contact during the times they are conversing on their phones, the instruments may try sending 'ringing sounds' for them (instead of the 'engaged ones'), wrongly indicating that there is a deliberate attempt not to pick the calls!! Further, when a person had tried calling them in their absence, the instruments cannily (or

embarrassingly) register only a couple of digits of the callers' numbers---thus confounding them to cudgel (or think hard) their brains, conjecturing about missing digits & the unknown callers. Yes, most of the times the landline telephones have behaved like mean viragos (i.e., women of masculine strength or spirit), maliciously machinating their moves, manufacturing misunderstanding about many of their human relations. But despite such misdemeanors, these gentlemen still love them and do not switch to mobile phones after all, what is love if we can't accept friends as they are, and for whatever they are!

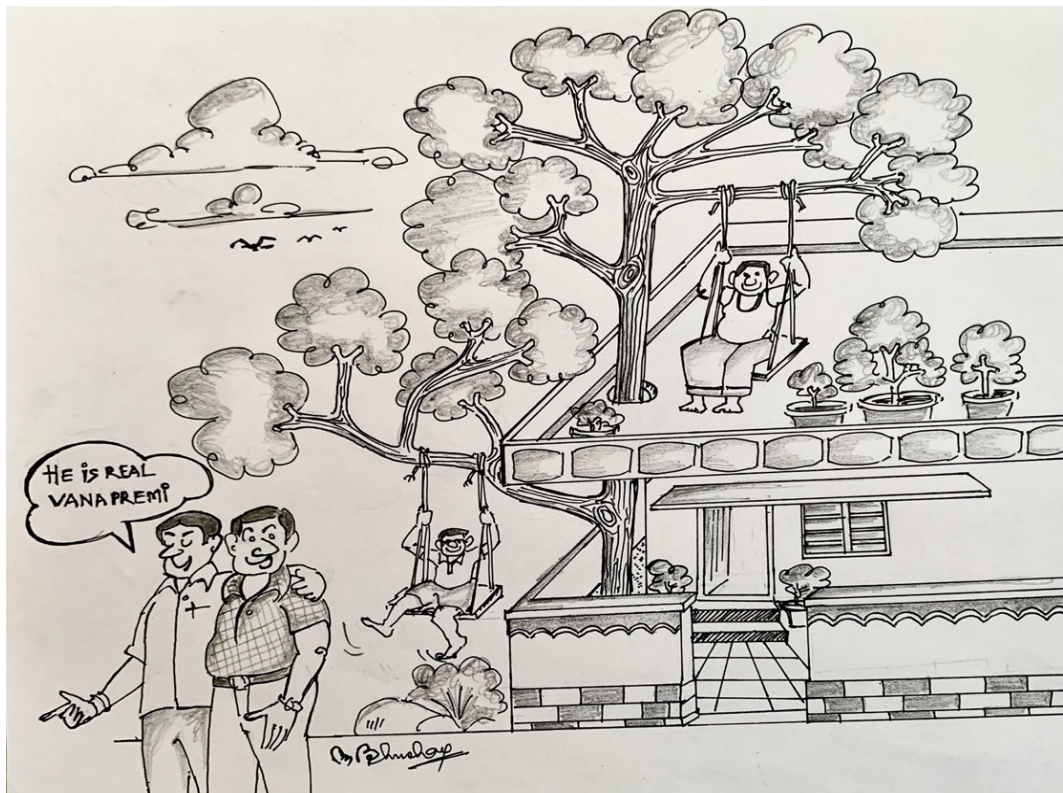
Concludingly, I hasten to reiterate that whatever had been stated above was in good humour and even if it looks like a sort of criticism somewhere, it is perhaps not undeserving and is certainly a way of bringing in a change so that they can become part of the modern

trend or at least of the mainstream.

Care had been duly taken not allow it to look like a habit when the descriptions become self-defeating & harmful, which have the tendency to quickly turn into a pernicious habit. It is universally known that no human being is perfect, and so there happen to be plenty of occasions when anything can be carped (or found fault) & criticized---doing which too often, however, makes the mind dwell on the unpleasantness, since a dour person generally lacks a sense of humour, and whose inability to see the lighter side of events will be driving people away from him!

The ensuing loneliness has the potential to fuel his unpleasant outlook and strengthen it---the inevitable result may then be that others avoid him as they would rather 'do without his company'.

(The author belongs to Karnataka Cadre, who happens to be the Chief Editor of 'Vana Vikas', a Quarterly).



By D. Nagabhushanam, IFS (Retd.)

Distinguished Alumnus of SFRC, Dr. K.Tulsi Rao



Southern Forest Rangers' College one of the premier institutes of Southern India headed by eminent and erudite senior Indian forest service officers deputed from different states imparted training to Forest apprentices and produced number of committed and knowledgeable officers of Forest Range officers' cadre like late Sri T. Narayana swamy IFS(Retd.), Sri K. Buchi Rami Reddy, IFS (Retd.) and Sri J.V.Sarma, IFS(Retd) all from Telangana region of Integrated Andhra Pradesh in early fifties of 20th century. Dr Raghottam Rao Desai IFS (Retd.) from Karnataka is one such eminent and erudite officer among them who also belonged to the alumni of SFRC.

In the last quarter of the twentieth century too SFRC produced number of eminent Forest Range officers and Dr K. Tulsi Rao is one among them. There were number of senior IFS officers, Former President of India and former Minister of Environment and Forests who praised the commitment, Knowledge and erudition of Dr K.Tulsi Rao in the context of his contribution towards wildlife and its conservation for more than three decades.

Dr K. Thulsi Rao, retired Deputy conservator of Forests, was inducted into A. P Forest Service and had his basic training in 'Forestry' from a premier institute - Southern Forest Rangers' College, Coimbatore during 1975-77. As far as his academic credentials are concerned,

he is an academican with a Doctorate in Wildlife Sciences, along with Diplomas in Crocodile Breeding & Sanctuary Management, Zoo Management etc. Coming to specialisations and super-specialisations he is an expert in breeding of highly endangered species; Habitat Characterization through Applications of Remote-sensing and GIS technologies. His work on spiders of Nallamalais, Eastern Ghats was published as Records of the Zoological Survey of India. He made an extensive floral and faunal studies of Nallamalais which was published in various National and International journals

After attaining the age of superannuation. he worked as Director, Biodiversity Research, AP State Biodiversity Board. Presently he is working as Director, Kundhi Global Biodiversity Solutions Pvt Ltd and as an advisor to the Council for Green Revolution .He is also a Chairperson- Greens Alliance for Conservation of Eastern Ghats (GrACE).He is the Founder of: 'Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Research (CBER)', formerly known as Ecological Research and Monitoring Laboratory, Srisailam Nallamalai Charter, Eastern Ghats, India, 'Abhayarnya Samrakshan through Holistic Resource Array Management (ASHRAM) a Federation for resource dependent communities and 'Ashram Mahila Vikas'.

His Discoveries of New species to the World in general and India in particular from Eastern Ghats and Southern part of India put him as Global level expert. He was associated with several International Bodies through Forest department as a Project Coordinator/consultant to FAO, World Bank, UNDP etc. To his credit about 50 of his papers were published as scientific publications and about 10 Books are ready for publication: Book on Eastern Ghats Overview was well appreciated and released by Sri Pranab Mukherji, Former -President of India and Dr Jairam Ramesh Former -Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

As an Ethologist (who studies the behaviour of animals in their natural habitat) he Captured an orphan young elephant by triggering communication between two elephants. As a herpetologist (someone who specializes in the study of reptiles and amphibians) he contributed his services in breeding, rearing and releasing of endangered species of crocodiles, snakes, turtles etc;



Dr K.Tulsi Rao felicitated on 27.3.2022 at Hyderabad

His achievements through research programmes include:

- Young captive crocodiles were saved from Nutritional Disorders (hunch back disease);
- Prevented large scale mortalities of male star tortoises from post mating inadequacies
- Increased natality (birth rate) percentage by Inducing parental care in breeding mugger crocodiles
- Improved Husbandry care of captive Mammals, Reptiles, Aves in captivity
- Led the team in mass translocation of 6000+

Blackbuck with least percentage of mortality

- Established a multi-research laboratory in Srisaillam. He contributed and encouraged applied and trans-disciplinary research for better results.

Coming to Awards and Honours, he received.

- Best Young Scientist Award Conferred by National Environmental Science Academy, New Delhi
- Rajiv Gandhi Wildlife Conservation Award -2003 For outstanding scientific and field work
- Worldwide Fund (WWF) Tiger Conservation Award -1999 For Notable work in involvement of people in Tiger Conservation.
- Dr. Salim Ali National Wildlife Fellowship Award -1999-2001
- Green Leader Award from CGR and GrACE.
- Earth Hero Award from India Foundation and Ranathambore Foundation – 2012:
- Bharatiya Vikas Ratan Award
- Paryavaran Mitra National Eminence Award 2019

Presently he is working as Visiting Professor at NIT Warangal, Open Universities on Environment, Ecology, Eco-technology, and Designing Biodiversity Parks. He is also an Advisor to several Environmental NGOs.

He was also Nominated by the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India as one of the five expert committee members for Conservation of Great Indian Bustards in the country.

Conclusion

To conclude one has to say that the forest department is bound to feel proud of having such officers who were trained in an institute of eminence like SFRC under the guidance of eminent IFS officers.

- **VVHP.**

Answers to the Green Quiz-May-2022.

1. Peregrine Falcon, 2. Blue Whale, 3. Queen Alexandra’s Bird Wing, 4. Polar Bear, 5. Whale Shark, 6. Saltwater Crocodile, 7. Giant Clam, 8. Ostrich, 9. Albatross, 10. South America’s Green Anaconda, 11. Capybara (South America), 12. China’s Giant Salamander, 13. Komodo Dragon, 14. Eastern Gorilla, 15. Red Kangaroo.

Forest Research in India – How Far Gone

Dr. Akula Kishan, I.F.S.(Retd.)



Forest Research in India is mostly confined to Government Research Institutes, and the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) is the umbrella organization which looks after the Research work in India.

The journey of ICFRE was initiated way back towards the end of the nineteenth century with the advent of scientific forestry in India and the establishment of the Forest School in Dehradun in 1878. It was on 5th June 1906 the Imperial Forest Research Institute was founded by Government of India for taking forward forestry research in the country. In 1986 the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education or ICFRE was formed for taking care of forestry research, education and extension needs of the country. On 1st June 1991, the ICFRE was declared an autonomous Council under the then Ministry of Environment and Forests and registered as a Society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. Presently, ICFRE with its Headquarters at Dehradun is an apex body in the national forestry research system that promotes and undertakes need based forestry research extension.

The Council has a pan India presence with its 9 Regional Research Institutes and 5 Centers in different bio-geographical regions of the country. The regional Research Institutes are located at Jodhpur, Dehradun, Shimla, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Ranchi, Bengaluru, Jorhat and Jabalpur, and the centres are at Agartala, Aizawl, Allahabad, Chhindwara and Visakhapatnam.

The following Directorates are functioning in ICFRE:

1. Directorate of Administration
2. Directorate of Education
3. Directorate of Extension
4. Directorate of Research
5. Director of International Co-operation
6. Directors of (9) Institutes

The details of Institutes and Research Centers and

their mandate is as follows:

1. The Forest Research Institute, Dehradun is engaged in carrying out educational and research works on different aspects of forestry in the jurisdiction states of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi. The detailed mandate is as follows:
 - a) To undertake and promote forestry research, education and extension, leading to scientific and sustainable management of forest resources.
 - b) To provide scientific advice to the central and state governments aiding informed decision making in matters of national and regional importance and international commitments and to address forestry research needs.
 - c) To provide technical assistance and material support to States, forest dependent communities, forest based industries, tree & NTFP growers and other stakeholders in their forestry based programmes for conservation and sustainable use of forest resources.
 - d) To undertake research and provide research support to stakeholders in the field of forest management and silviculture of important species of forest and trees outside forests.
 - e) To undertake research on bio-prospecting of forest resources for eco-friendly product development for various applications along with conservation, propagation and sustainable harvest of NTFP and lesser known species.
 - f) 6. To undertake research and knowledge management on aspects of forest health and protection including management

- and control of weeds and invasive species, climate change mitigation and adaptation issues, forest hydrology and forest fire.
- g) To undertake research on eco-restoration and rehabilitation of mined out areas & other stressed/degraded/difficult sites.
 - h) To undertake research on genetic improvement in important species of forest and trees outside forest for enhancement of productivity.
 - i) To undertake research on properties of timber, timber identification, wood seasoning, wood preservation, wood composites, bamboo processing and utilization.
 - j) To develop, upgrade and maintain the National Forest Library and Information Centre (NFLIC).
 - k) To develop and preserve repositories including herbarium, National Forest Insect Collection (NFIC) & Fungarium.
 - l) To develop, upscale, disseminate and share of appropriate technologies to end-users through innovative extension strategies and capacity building programmes.
 - m) To undertake all such activities as necessary, incidental and conducive to attainment of the objectives of the ICFRE.
2. Tropical Forest Research Institute Jabalpur is one of the eight regional Institutes under the ICFRE, Dehradun. The Institute came into existence in April 1988, although its origin goes back to 1973 when a Regional Centre of Forest Research Institute, Dehradun was established at Jabalpur to provide research support to the problems of forest management in central India comprising of the states of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Orissa.
 3. Arid Forest Research Institute Jodhpur has been established since 1988 to cater the forestry research needs of the arid and semi- arid region of Rajasthan, Gujarat & Dadar Nagar Haveli & Daman-Diu.
 4. Himalayan Forest Research Institute Shimla was established as High Level Conifer Regeneration Research Centre during May 1977 for carrying out Research on problem associated with natural regeneration of Silver Fir and Spruce.
 5. Institute of Forest Productivity Ranchi takes care of eastern Himalayas in Sikkim and North Bengal, Indo-gangetic plains in Bihar and West Bengal, deltaic and coastal mangroves of the world famous Sunderbans, a pocket of Terai Sal forest in the north west corner of Bihar and tropical deciduous forests of Kaimur and Chotanagpur plateau. Thus taking care of research needs of eastern India.
 6. Institute of Forest Biodiversity Hyderabad was established during December 2012 by way of upgradation of the erstwhile Forest Research Centre, Hyderabad, to take up research and development projects on the biodiversity. The Institute has a field station spread over sixty acres at Mulugu, Hyderabad.
 7. Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding Coimbatore is a national Institute established in April 1988. A multi-faceted research Institute primarily aimed to carry out research to improve productivity of forest tree species through conventional breeding programmes and biotechnological interventions. Mainstream research carried out by the Genetics and Biotechnology divisions is supported by Silviculture, Seed technology, Protection (Entomology & Pathology), Agro-forestry and Bio-diversity divisions.
 8. Rain Forest Research Institute Jorhat came into being in 1988 to cater the forestry related research & extension needs of the North Eastern Region of the country. The Institute encompasses of all the disciplines of forestry research. Recently an Advanced Research Centre for Bamboo and Rattan (ARCBAR) has also been established at Aizwal in Mizoram under this Institute.
 9. Institute of Wood Science and Technology Bengaluru was established in 1988. Earlier, the then Government of Mysore had set up a Forest Research Laboratory (FRL) at Bengaluru in 1938. In the initial years, work was carried out mainly on properties and uses of different timber

species, essential oils, other non-wood forest products and protection of wood and trees from pests and diseases. In 1956, this laboratory was organized as a regional centre of Forest Research Institute and Colleges, Dehra Dun. In 1977, Sandal Research Centre was set up to undertake research on wide-ranging aspects of genetics, silviculture and management of sandal.

10. Forest Research Centre for Skill Development Chhindwara came into existence on 30th March 1995. It was declared as a Satellite Centre of Tropical Forest Research Institute, Jabalpur on 3rd January 1996.
11. Forest Research Centre for Bamboo & Rattan Aizawl was established in 2004 at Aizawl, Mizoram as a unit of Rain Forest Research Institute (RFRI), Jorhat, Assam for socio-economic upliftment of Northeastern people that revolve around Bamboos and Rattans.
12. Forest Research Centre for Eco-Rehabilitation Prayagraj was established in October 1992. The Centre aims to nurture and cultivate professional excellence in the field of social forestry and Eco-rehabilitation in the state of Uttar Pradesh and to undertake focused research on rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems and difficult /stress sites and promotion of Agro-forestry.
13. Forest Research Center for Livelihood Extension Agartala came into existence in July, 2012 as unit of RFRI Jorhat. It is one of the two Centres under RFRI, Jorhat in the Northeastern Region, the other being, ARCBR, Aizawl.
14. Forest Research Centre for Coastal Ecosystem Visakhapatnam to carry out focused research on biodiversity of Eastern Ghats, FGRM of mangrove and coastal ecosystems, to undertake research on marine wood biodegradation.

Apart from the above there is National Research Centre for Agroforestry (NRCAF), as

unit of Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) was established in 1988. The Centre is located at Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh, for demonstration and promotion of best agroforestry models for rainfed/irrigated/arable/non-arable ecosystems.

Another Institute under ICAR is Indian Institute of Soil and Water Conservation, Dehra Dun. The Institute and Research Centers have focused on evolving strategies for controlling land degradation following watershed approach, tackling special problems such as ravines, landslides, mine spoils and torrents, demonstration of technologies for popularization and imparting training besides developing technologies for water harvesting and recycling.

Research done and transfer of technology to field:

1. The various Institutes are undertaking Research in forestry and related matters over the years, but the documentation and data centers are not yet developed.
2. There is hardly any noticeable transfer of technology from lab to field.
3. The ICAR has expanded into 111 ICAR Institutes with about 71 Agricultural Universities. Comparatively the growth of ICFRE is not appreciable. The ICAR has established one Research Institute for each cereal etc. thus concentrating research on a particular subject.
4. The Forest Research on forestry species takes long time over the years compared to agricultural research, but efforts are to be made to shorten the duration of Research by technologies such as genetic engineering.
5. Forest Research should also concentrate on propagation techniques apart from improved seed technologies.
6. The Research Institutes should set more trial plots and monitor them, without assigning them to the field officers who are not well versed in research methodology.

(The author is Retired Conservator of Forests, Telangana State, authored many books on Forest code and allied Acts and drafted various amendments. Currently he is working as Legal consultant to the AP Forest Department and a practicing Advocate in the AP High Court.)



Time is Short (On the Eve of International Mother Earth Day)

Konda Mohan, DCF; HMWSSB.

*Mother Earth is Laughing and Laughing repeatedly
For celebrating its seventy second Birth Anniversary
by the people of all Nations around the Globe,
Earth is 'closing its ears' for the Jargons & noisy slogans*

*Birthday, International Mother Earth Day, or Anniversary Day
whatever may be the nomenclature used
Mother Earth is doubting on its own existence
Whether it can celebrate its Birth centenary or not*

*Russia says it has its own reason for deadly war
Ukraine becomes a puppet in the hands of other Nations
Developed countries "collecting coins on the Dead bodies"
"Kim" is holding Atom Bombs to play like Tennis balls*

*Fools are ruling many of the Nations
driven away with their instant Emotions
Quarrelling with neighbors for silly Reasons
Keeping the Mother Earth at "Death Destination"*

*Time is too short to protect our Heavenly Home
Awake, Arise and come to "Invest in our Planet"
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle is our main Target
Preserve, Reserve and Conserve is our working Triplet*

*Let us all think wisely to take timely action
Take sincere oath for Mother Earth's protection
To rejuvenate the Globe with Forest Conservation
Finally, to handover "Safe Earth" to our Future generations*

(The poet is Dy Conservator of Forests, Telangana State and presently working on deputation with HMWSSB Hyderabad. Feed back: Mobile: 7989748529 and Email: dcfhwmwssb@gmail.com)

The Relevance of Environment and Civil Rights

V.V. Hariprasad



Prominent environmental justice activist Deeoehn Ferris once quipped, “We are all in a sinking ship, people of color and poor are just closer to the hole.” This metaphor captures the intuitive idea that we really cannot get to a sustainable level of development until we deal with the very hard set of issues that have been raised by those in the environmental justice movement. American environmental justice movement originated with the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and of Title VI, which prohibited the use of federal funds to discriminate on the basis of race, color and national origin. In this connection the ruling of Supreme court of India for restoration of Aravali forest of Haryana is highly relevant.

Supreme court ruling of 2018

Kant Enclave ruling:

A proposal to rehabilitate nearly 425 acres of the Aravali forest land in Faridabad, was tabled by the forest department a long back, which has been gathering dust despite Supreme Court directions calling for the restoration of the area

In September 2018, the Supreme Court had ordered the demolition of structures in the erstwhile Kant Enclave colony, developed near Anangpur village in Faridabad’s Surajkund area, ruling that it had been built on Aravali forest land in illegal collusion with officials of the then Haryana government. In its judgment, the court had also observed, “The damage caused to the Aravali hills, as already noted, is irreversible. However, perhaps some of the damage could be remedied - at least we hope so.”

On the court’s directions, R Kant & Co — the developer found to be in violation of forest law — had already deposited a sum of ₹5 crore with the Aravali Rehabilitation Fund “for rehabilitation of the damaged areas.”

Accordingly, in December 2019, the forest department drew up a plan to reforest Kant Enclave’s 425 acres over a period of five years, using only native species of trees and shrubs. This land,, was accorded legal “forest” status by virtue of a notification under special sections 4 and 5 of the

Punjab Land Preservation Act (1900)

“The plantation work was to be done on a budget of ₹5 crore. The developer had already deposited the penalty amount in the ARF sometime in 2018. We made the restoration plan in December 2019 and it was sent for approval sometime in February 2020,” said Suresh Punia, former district forest officer of Faridabad.

At least 33 illegal structures in Kant Enclave were demolished in October 2019, more than a year after the apex court’s ruling.

Environment must prevail over other rights, forests have to be preserved: Supreme court

The Haryana government filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court saying around 40 per cent of the state’s area comes under forest land and all the areas covered under Punjab Land Preservation Act cannot be considered as a “forest land”. The government has also said that if it implements the apex court’s 2018 verdict in the Faridabad Kant Enclave demolition case, it would mean that all the structures that stand on 40 per cent of the state’s geographical area would be required to be demolished. Expressing its inability to follow the verdict and citing “unparalleled law and order problems” that could emanate if the government attempts to implement the verdict, the government has prayed for further instructions from the court

Why did Haryana government file this affidavit?

In 2002, 2018 and in July 2021, the Supreme Court has reiterated that “all areas notified under Sections 3,

4 and 5 of the PLP Act are forest lands including where the validity period of the notification has expired”, adding: “Every structure constructed on such land after issuance of any notification under the provisions of the PLP Act are illegal structures and are required to be demolished.”

On July 23, a bench of Justices AM Khanwilkar and Dinesh Maheshwari directed the Haryana government to ensure that all unauthorized structures standing on Aravali forest land — “without any exception” — should be cleared.

On September 20, hearing a case filed by Satpal and Others versus Union of India, the Supreme Court directed Haryana government to file an affidavit “to clearly state about the factual basis as to how the area has been first notified as forest area” and to clarify related matters. In response, Haryana’s Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests filed the affidavit apprising the court about multiple notifications over the years declaring forest land in the state and explaining why all structures on the land covered under PLPA can not be removed.

What did the Haryana government say in the affidavit?

The government apprised the apex court that total area of 17,39,907 Ha (39.35 per cent of the total geographical area of the State) has been notified under Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Punjab Land Preservation (PLPA) Act. This includes 100 per cent area of at least 11 of the 22 districts including Panchkula, Ambala, Yamunanagar, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Palwal, Mewat, Mahendragarh, Rewari, Bhiwani and Charkhi Dadri.

Giving reference to the apex court’s judgments in multiple cases, the state has said that, “About 39.35 per cent of the geographical area of the State of Haryana, being notified under the provisions of the PLP Act are required to be considered as forest and every structure constructed after issuance of the notification for the first time are required to be considered as illegal and are required to be demolished.”

What is the challenge the government faces now?

In the Kant Enclave case, the Supreme Court order

pertaining to Khori village said “all areas notified under Section 3, 4 and 5 of the PLP Act are required to be considered as forest and structures standing thereon are required to be considered as illegal, unless requisite permission under Forest Conservation Act is obtained, and liable to be demolished”.

What is the list of critical establishments that Haryana says will be required to be demolished?

If Supreme Court’s directives is followed, Haryana says many critical establishments like the CRPF Group Centre in Kalka, Panchkula, Terminal Ballistic Research Laboratory (TBRL) and Test Range in Ramgarh, Panchkula, ITBP Corporate Office in Ramgarh (Panchkula, Chandimandir Cantonment in Panchkula, the Indira Gandhi Super Thermal Power Plant in Jhajjar, Deen Bandhu Sir Chhotu Ram University of Science and Technology and CRPF Camp in Sonipat, Gurgaon Air Force Station, Tata Energy Research Institute and National Institute of Solar Energy along with hundreds of headquarters of multinational companies, hundreds of government offices, hospital and educational institutes in Gurgaon and National Security Guard complex in Manesar would have to be razed.

What are the two key decisions on PLPA that are yet pending in Supreme Court?

In 2014, the Haryana government approached Supreme Court in the MC Mehta and other cases where the Court was considering protection of Aravali forest land. Haryana, at that time, moved an application seeking clarification that land notified under expired notifications or orders passed under Section 4, 5 of PLPA should not be treated as forest. This plea is still pending consideration of the apex court.

In February 2019, following the Kant Enclave judgment, Haryana Vidhan Sabha passed an amendment to PLPA and excluded certain lands meant for construction from the ambit of PLPA notification. But, on March 1, 2019, Supreme Court forbade the Haryana government from taking any action in furtherance of the the PLPA (Amendment) Act, 2019. This matter is also yet pending.

View of the Supreme Court of India in New Delhi (MARCH 29,2022)

Forest has to be preserved,” the Bench said, adding, “It

is only because of strict interpretation and exposition by this court that the forest cover is increasing.”

The environment “must prevail” over other rights and forests must be preserved, the Supreme Court said on March 29 while hearing a matter which involved issues regarding forest and non-forest land in Haryana.

“Environment is more important than your civil rights,” a Bench headed by Justice A. M. Khanwilkar said, adding, “The environment must prevail over all other rights”.

The Bench, also comprising Justices A. S. Oka and C. T. Ravikumar, was hearing the pleas which raised the issue regarding forest and non-forest land in reference to interplay between provisions of the Punjab Land Preservation Act, 1900, the Forest Conservation Act, 1980, and the land which forms part of development plan under the Faridabad Complex (Regulation and Development) Act, 1971.

The top court observed that the fulcrum is about forest and its existence so that it does not disappear because of acquisition of land. It said town planning is “something materialistic approach” while issue of preservation of forest has a different approach which relates to environment.

“Forest has to be preserved,” the Bench said, adding, “It is only because of strict interpretation and exposition by this court that the forest cover is increasing.” During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the Bench that the apex court, while hearing the Faridabad’s Kant Enclave matter, was informed about certain amendments in the Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA), 1900.

He said the apex court had asked the State of Haryana on March 1, 2019 not to act without permission of the court under the amendment Act. Mr. Mehta said the top court might have felt that because of the court’s judgment in the Kant Enclave matter, in which it had ordered demolition of certain unauthorized structures there saying they were built on forest land, this amendment was made.

The Solicitor General said he had made it clear to the court on the next day that demolition in Kant Enclave as per the top court’s Order will go ahead. He referred to an application filed in that matter by Haryana and said the State has sought permission to act upon the Punjab Land Preservation (Haryana Amendment) Act 2019 after due publication in the official gazette.

Mr. Mehta said application is pending before another Bench which is seized of the main matter. He told the apex court that the State’s application can be dealt with by this Bench so that the issue can be considered holistically.

“The difficulty is, in view of the continuance of the stay, it would be little handicap on my part to address your lordships on the PLPA because we have to rely upon the amendment,” Mr. Mehta said.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for some petitioners, told the Bench that one of the prayers in the plea is that the amendment Act be implemented. The Bench noted that the petitioners are seeking certain reliefs and one of the incidental reliefs may have bearing on the direction issued by the apex court on March 1, 2019.

“After hearing the Solicitor General and the counsel appearing for the writ petitioner in the present writ petition as also the amicus curiae we are of the considered view that the prayer made in IA (filed by Haryana) needs to be dealt with along with the prayers in the writ petition...which has been heard by a three-judge Bench for quite some time..,” the Bench observed.

“We order accordingly. Registry to do the needful,” it said. The hearing in the matter would be continued

Haryana had last year filed an affidavit in the apex court, which had earlier asked it to clearly state about the factual basis as to how the area has been first notified as forest area, be it under the Union enactment or the State enactment, as the case may be, and also related matters which can be taken into account for answering the controversy in issue.

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The Times That Were:

Two Near Encounters and a Kidnap in Two days

Dr. K. Tirupataiah, IFS (Retd.)

To generalize, officers in the Headquarters almost always looked down and talked down the field officers. It appeared (in the opinion of headquarters officers) as though field officers were not giving their best.

However, my first hand experiences while working as Sub-DFO in Nizamabad Forest Division told a different story about the field conditions. It was summer and beedi leaf collection time in 1989-90. This was a period when Left-Wing Extremist (LWE) activity was at its peak in North Telangana districts, especially in Nizamabad district.

One fine day, the senior most officer in-charge of State Trading Corporation (STC) Circle visited Nizamabad forest circle. The officer was very critical of the progress in beedi leaf collection. After a night's halt at Medak, he decided to visit beedi leaf Khalls. Following are incidents that followed:

1. Dead body in Beedi leaf Khalla

The senior officer, CF, DFOs and Sub-DFOs and other field officers followed to one of the beedi leaf Khallas very early in the morning. All the way to the Khalla, the senior officer was recalling the glorious days of field work and how standards are falling by the year.

When we reached the Khalla, the people who were supposed to be there were nowhere to receive. The senior officer expected an explanation. Before any explanation could be given a person came running and cried that the Khalladar is no more. He was gunned down by Naxalites a while ago and his body was lying in the Khalla.

We had to beat a hasty retreat and with heart beat reaching its maximum returned to the Forest Rest House (FRH) Medak. There were sharp comments on failure of intelligence, fore-warning, etc. After gathering our wits, took breakfast and were contemplating what next?. The senior officer ordered that we visit beedi leaf

Khallas in another division. Incident number one shook us up.

2. You Fools-Drive Away

After the first incident, we visited one or two Khallas and drove to the Nizam Sagar Guest house for lunch. No sooner than we finished our lunch, staff of the CF's brother (he was the Irrigation engineer there) informed that naxalite movement is there.

Drive again. When the vehicles reached Banswada town something did not feel good. There were no people on road and there was silence all around. When our vehicles were about to pass the local Police Station, they came to a sudden halt. On our left was the Police Station where the SHO holding his pistol, one hand oozing blood. There were police men fallen down, injured. On our right was a high rise building from where Naxals were firing indiscriminately, just a while ago.

The Banswada FRO was leading us in his jeep followed by the other vehicles. The moment SHO saw the FRO, he started shouting, "You fools, Drive away or you will be killed in the cross-fire". The SHO was injured but was still bravely holding forte.

The officers in the vehicles were like sitting ducks. By God's grace, the moment our vehicles entered that place, there was a short intermission in the firing. One must experience the chill that went through our spines. It cannot be described. Our vehicles then sped away. On the way to Nizamabad, everyone was silent. After sometime the discussion again came back to how there is no proper intelligence, communication, coordination, etc.

The senior officer was now furious and angry that his life was subject to test so many times in a single day. We the juniors then poured out. "These are the circumstances under which we work", I said. "Please understand that the field staff were placing their lives

on the line in discharge of their duties everyday". He appeared to have heard what was said.

After reaching Nizamabad, there was a meeting with the SP, Collector over dinner and discussion on what happened in the field. The SP informed that what was going on at Banswada was the worst attack that the Police suffered yet.

3. Where is the ACF?

Next day morning, the senior officer got and read all news papers and came to understand the enormity of what happened at Banswada and how many police men lost their lives.

He took the return journey and we all followed. Around Kamareddy area, he suddenly wanted to visit a beedi leaf Khalla, again. In between, the senior officer

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left his white Ambassador and came in to the black Ambassador of the CF. Reason, Naxals know that White Ambassador was from Hyderabad and could target it. After a while, someone noticed something missing. The White car was nowhere to be seen.

The ACF of Kamareddy was sitting in that car and the car vanished somewhere around the beedi leaf Khalla. Later when he returned safely, in the same white car, he narrated how Naxals took away that car thinking that a senior officer was in it and they could bargain a ransom or some such thing, by capturing him.

The white car left for Hyderabad, all horns blazing.

(In remembrance of all those brave foresters who served with distinction during those hard years).

“Tell people there’s an invisible man in the sky who created the universe, and the vast majority will believe you. Tell them the paint is wet, and they have to touch it to be sure.”

— George Carlin

Continuation from page No. 51

The apex court stressed on the need to preserve forests and said it is because of the strict interpretation and exposition by the top court that the forest cover is increasing.

Conclusion: All human beings depend on the environment in which we live. A safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full

enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and sanitation. Without a healthy environment, we are unable to fulfil our aspirations. Environmental Rights are related to the protection of natural resources; the access to and use of natural resources; and how the access to and use of these resources affect surrounding populations, as well as the resources themselves **(SOURCE: INTERNET)**

(The writer is retired Dy.C.F, an advocate, a guest faculty member of Central University of Hyderabad, and formerly Consultant IFB, GoI and can be accessed on vvh53@gmail.com and mobile: +91 78936 73767.)



Inauguration of Induction Level Training Programme for 31st Batch Forest Beat Officers

The induction training program for 31st Batch Forest Beat Officers was inaugurated on 08.04.2022 in Telangana State Forest Academy, Dulapally, Hyderabad, by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of the Forest Force, Telangana State.

Speaking on the occasion, Sri. P.V. Raja Rao, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests and Director, Telangana State Forest Academy, Hyderabad, said that the Forest Academy is imparting training for forest officers of various levels from all over India and the State. Introducing the trainees, he said that the present batch consists of (55) members belonging to different parts of the state. Of them (10) are Post Graduates, (42) are Graduates in various disciplines and (16) are woman officers.

Further, the Director said that the trainees will be taught various forestry subjects along with the imparting of physical training in the Academy and will have exposure to multiple activities of the forestry sector during the tour outside the Academy in the (6) month Induction Training Program. Weapon training, training in surveys, etc., are also form part of the training. He also said that the training would help the trainee officers acquire knowledge, skills and technical know-how to become professional foresters. The Director said that inculcating the quality of discipline in the trainees is the first and foremost thing of the Training Program. He said that one must have the qualities of Determination, Discipline, devotion, and Dedication to excel in service.

Chief Guest of the occasion, Sri. Rakesh Mohan Dobriyal, IFS, PCCF and HoFF said that the Forest Beat Officers hold a key position in the Forest Department. They have an indispensable role in protecting forests and wildlife and executing forest developmental works, which are perceived as the ecological restoration of forests. They are the representatives and face of the department at the field level. The PCCF desired that the trainee officers should continue to have hold on the subject which they pursued during their academic studies and should acquire knowledge and get mastery over one of the various branches, at least, of forestry, e.g. wildlife, grassland development, forest law, etc., of

their choice and inclination and cultivate the attribute of inquisitiveness which help foster the growth and development of an individual into a professional. Foresters have the unique opportunity to serve the environment, which is vital for the very survival of humanity, he said. They are contributing their might to the mitigation of climate change. The Head of the Department wanted the trainees to be honest, committed to work and accountable to the system, leaving their impression. The PCCF said that it should be borne in mind that there has been tremendous pressure on the forests as the last land left is remained with Forest Department only.

Further, the HoFF said that Telangana state had registered tremendous growth in forest cover, vis-a-vis the other states in the country, owing to the implementation of the world's 3rd biggest planting program, the prestigious Telanganaku Hariitha Haram, due to the firm commitment of the State Government, especially by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of the state towards the greenery development.

Sri. V. Anjaneyulu, Deputy Director and Course Director for the Induction Training Program of the 7th Batch Forest Range Officer trainees, submitted a brief account of the training program of FRO trainees. The batch comprises (62) trainees belonging to (7) states of the country, namely, Tamilnadu, Jammu & Kashmir, Nagaland, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Chattisgarh and Telangana, whose training is going to be completed in the next month.

Conservator of Forests and Additional Director, Sri. S. Ramesh, IFS, Deputy Directors, Smt. J. Vasantha, IFS, Sri. V. Anjaneyulu, Sri. V. Ram Mohan, the Course Director of 31st Batch FBO Trainees, Smt. S.A.Nagina Banu, Asst. Course Directors, Sri. Y.Subhash Chandra Yadav, Sri. M.Ram Mohan, Asst. Directors, Sri. M. Vamshi Krishna, Smt. K. Shiva Jyothi, Sri. Sk. Baba Khadarvali, Dy. Range Officer, Smt. Umarani, Forest Section Officers, Sri. Praveen Kumar, Smt. Saritha, Physical Training Instructors, Sri. Ashok Reddy, Sri. Kondal Rao, 7th Batch FRO trainees and other staff participated in the event.

- M. Ram Mohan

XXI All INDIA FRC Meet- Kurnool

(Motto: Meeting together; Greeting together; Enjoying together - With all odds)

With the active encouragement of Sri S.B. Deshpande 1959-61 Batch (SFRC), the founder of the All India FRC Meet in 1999, this Alumni Meet was conducted in Kurnool City of Andhra Pradesh from 21-03-2022 to 24-03-2022. The total participation was 49 Nos from 9 States, the maximum representation from Maharashtra followed by Tamil Nadu. Fourteen officers came along with families. All participants were received at Railway Station or Airport by Sri Y. Rajendra and Sri K. Sudhakar Reddy.

On day one (21.03.2022), the participants assembled in Conference Hall in Hotel Triguna Clarks Inn. After the welcome address by Sri Y. Rajendra (SFRC 1980-81) & Sri K Sudhakar Reddy (SFRC 1976-78) and a brief self-introduction and sharing of experiences in Forest College, all had proceeded to Nagaravanam (a 10 km journey) and Celebrated "World Forestry Day" by planting one plant each. This event was aptly covered by Arial photography by a drone. After the event, all the participants returned to the conference hall. Sri Gangadhar Naik (1974-76) assisted the organizers in updating information on the arrival and departure of participants.

The Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forestry Division, Kurnool, Divisional Forest Officer, Flying Squad, Kurnool graced the meet and addressed the participants. It was followed by folk dances, Kuchipudi dances and entertainment. Everyone enjoyed the dance performance by girl artistes of Dance School of Kurnool run by dance master Sri S. Karimullah. Shiva Parvathi Nritya was the highlight of the event. Each woman participant was presented with a handloom saree by DFO (S.F.), Kurnool and the spouse of DFO, Flying Squad, Kurnool. It was followed by dinner and happy hours.

On the 2nd day, the participants were taken to Mahanandi, a Shiva Temple in Nallamalai Forests, where the participants enjoyed a natural perennial spring. The temple visit was followed by lunch and happy hours at the Eco-Tourism facility in the middle of the Nallamalai Forest area. In the evening, after visiting "Rock-Gardens", a natural rock formation near Kurnool, the participants were taken back to the hotel, where a sumptuous dinner was arranged.

On the 3rd day, the participants were taken to Jogulamba Shakti Peetam (historical Shiva Temple) at Alampur and then to Jagannathagattu, where the participants had enjoyed planting Ficus species in the crevices of rocks on the hilltop of Jagannathagattu. A good lunch was arranged at Jagannathagattu. Sri Mohan Singh, Forest Range Officer, took care of darshan at the temples.

After returning to the hotel, the participants assembled in the banquet hall, and Sri K. Sudhakar Reddy (1976-78 SFRC) gave a presentation on Red Sanders. Sri S.K. Jain (1979-81 Batch, Balaghat) presented his Tree Groove in Jabalpur M.P. Sri Purnachandra Rao (1982-83 SFRC), Retired DGP, Telangana, joined the participants and shared his memorable experiences of Forest College.

The participants enjoyed Flock dances by the local artistes, and songs from Sri S.K. Jain., Mrs Prabhakar Nagdev from Chattisgarh. All the women too joined the male participants in singing and dancing. Sri P. Rama Krishna I.F.S., Conservator of Forests, Kurnool Circle, Kurnool, joined the participants, and enjoyed songs, dances, etc.; after dinner and happy hours, all retired for the day.

On 24-03-2022, the participants started departing, and the organizing committee dropped all of them at Railway Station, Airport, as required. Before boarding the train/flight, some of the participants visited Kondareddy Buruju, a historical fort of Kurnool, Saibaba Temple and purchased G. Pullareddy Sweets, famous of its kind in Kurnool.

The participants left the meet with heavy hearts posting excellent feedback that the meet was unique, marvellous, and memorable (Sri Ramakrishna, TN); set a landmark (Sri Santosh Kumar Jain, MP); took care of all possible aspects from logistics to planting tall seedlings on the hillock (Sri R.S. Bhangu, Maharashtra); it's like a booster dose for Omocron (Ajit N Pawar Maharashtra). Everyone immensely enjoyed the Kurnool meet as the organizers took the utmost care to make it not a formal meet but a family get-together.

(Photos of the event on the center page)



Birthday Greetings



We wish the following born on the dates mentioned

“A VERY HAPPY BIRTH DAY”

S.No.	Name of the Member	D.O.B.	S.No.	Name of the Serving Officers	D.O.B.
Sarva Sri			9.	B. Saidulu	09-05-1974
1.	G. Gurunathudu	10-05-1949	10.	N.Nageshwara Rao	10-05-1971
2.	B. Soma Sekara Reddy	10-05-1954	11.	G. Ravi	15-05-1962
3.	S. Kishan Das	10-05-1955	12.	Smt. G.B. Rekha Banu	15-05-1984
4.	Qamar Mohd Khan	11-05-1947	13.	Ch. Ganga Reddy	19-05-1966
5.	M.A. Waheed	12-05-1953	14.	G.N. Pavan Kumar Rao	20-05-1967
6.	M. Purushotham Reddy	14-05-1952	15.	D. Asha Kiran	20-05-1980
7.	K. Shekar Reddy	16-05-1956	16.	K. Mahaboob Basha	21-05-1986
8.	K.C. Augustin	21-05-1930	17.	N. Jogender	24-05-1965
9.	S. Rama Rao	25-05-1950	18.	K. Ramkishan	01-06-1963
10.	B.S.Yousuf Sharief	23-05-1953	19.	Smt. N. Kshitija	01-06-1976
11.	K. Pradeep	28-05-1954	20.	T. Chakrapani	01-06-1966
12.	T. Samboji Rao	01-06-1948	21.	D. Ravindranath Reddy	02-06-1982
13.	Y. Ram Mohan Rao	02-06-1941	22.	P. Ramakrishna	02-06-1972
14.	M. Darshanam	04-06-1951	23.	K. Srinivas	04-06-1977
15.	Gunturu Satyanarayana	04-06-1954	24.	A.V.S.R.K.Appanna	04-06-1963
S.No. Name of the Serving Officers D.O.B.			25.	Shaik Salaam	04-06-1963
Sarva Sri			26.	Y.V. Narsimha Rao	05-06-1980
1.	Smt. R. Yesoda Bai	14-05-1986	27.	G. G. Narentheran	22-05-1989
2.	Dr. Sekher Babu Geddam	15-05-1986	28.	N. S. B. Raju	09-05-1962
3.	S. Ramesh	19-05-1974	29.	N. Siva Kumar	31-05-1975
4.	B.M.Diwan Mydeen	21-05-1978	30.	U. Koteshwara Rao	10-05-1982
5.	C. Sarvanan	01-06-1978	31.	Shaik Adam Nagini Banu	14-05-1976
6.	S.S. Sreedhar	04-06-1966			
7.	Smt. S.J. Asha	07-05-1975			
8.	M. Bhabji Rao	08-05-1968			

- Secretary



OBITUARY



N. Vara Prasada Rao

[28. 7. 1951 - 11. 4. 2022]

Sri N. Vara Prasada Rao, Retd. DFO expired on 11.4.2022 in Vijayawada due to a chronic kidney problem. Vara Prasada Rao was born on 28.7.1951 at Annaram village of Krishna district. He had his schooling in Machilipatnam and graduated with B.Sc. Botany from Hindu College, Machilipatnam. Mastered in Zoology from Bhopal University, MP during 1970-72. He worked as a lecturer in Botany in Hyderabad from 1972 to 73.

He was selected as Forest Range Officer and deputed for training at SFRC, Coimbatore, from 1973 to 75. After practical training in Rudraram Range of Kurnool Division, he was posted as FRO, Logging Charla, in Bhadrachalam North Logging Division. Later he worked as FRO, Kothagudem, Kalyanadurgam, APFDC, Sathupally. He worked as an instructor in Forest Training School, Yellandu, during 1985-88.

He was promoted to Asst. Conservator of Forests in 1989 and was posted as Sub-DFO, Tirupathi, where he worked up to 1993. He was deputed as ACF in AP Forest Academy, Dulapally, Hyderabad, during 1994-96.

Later he worked as DFO, Flying Squad, DFO, Wildlife Management, DFO, Social Forestry, Rajahmundry. He was State Silviculturist in Regional Forest Research Centre, Rajahmundry, up to 2005. Finally, he worked as DFO, Logging, Jangareddygudem, retired on superannuation on 31.7.2006 and settled in Vijayawada.

After retirement, he was deeply involved in social service and religious activities. He worked as a consultant on 'Mangrove Regeneration and Management' in Krishnapatnam port Ltd. Nellore, till 2020.

Sri Vara Prasad was a sincere, hard-working, and highly committed officer and got appreciation from all the officers with whom he had worked and more so from subordinate officers. He was an excellent human being and an affectionate friend with a positive attitude.

He was married to Mrs Narmada on 30.3.1977 in Gudivada of Krishna District and was blessed with two sons and a daughter. His elder son, Mr Anil Babu, is a Staff Engineer at Navis LLC and lives in Fremont, California, USA. His second son, Mr Vijay, is a consultant in Vitesco Technologies, GMBH, and lives in Frankfurt, Germany. Both are married and well settled.

His daughter, Dr Mrs Rosy Sireesha, is a Reader in Sibar Dental Collage, Guntur, and a cosmetic Dental Surgeon at Vijayawada. She is married to Dr Siva Prasad Ponnamanda, Chief Interventional Cardiologist at Sentini Hospital, Vijayawada. Dr Vara Prasad has taken immense care of Vara Prasada Rao during his ailment for the past five years.

Sri Vara Prasada Rao was an excellent human being with a service motive and a true Christian.

- K. Prabhakar Rao.

OBITUARY



Sardar Iqbal Singh [9.4.1953 - 14.4.2022]

With profound grief, we inform the sudden demise of Sri Sardar Iqbal Singh, an upright, sincere, affectionate, and straightforward Forest Officer respected for his friendly nature, integrity, simplicity, and professionalism, on 14th April 2022. He was born on 9th April 1953 to Sri Khushhal Singh and Smt Kamala Bai at Motilal Hospital, Mozamjahi Market, in Hyderabad. His Father, Sri Khushhal Singh, was an Audit Officer at Bidar in the Nizam government. Iqbal Singh was the youngest of all six siblings (among three brothers and three sisters). His Father, Sri Kushhal Singh, died just five years back after his hip bone fractured at the age of 94. Iqbal Singh took immense care of his Father till he breathed his last.

He did his schooling at Methodist School, Abids, Hyderabad (during which time the family lived in Gowliguda and then Mangalhat, Shah Inayat Gunj) and graduated from Nizam College Hyderabad. After completing his Graduation, he worked in Punjab and Sind Bank for six months before joining the Forest Service in October 1976. He underwent FRO's training for six months at Forest School, Yellandu. After working as Forest Range Officer for one year, he was deputed to undergo regular training at CFRC, Chandrapur, for one year. After completing the training at CFRC, Iqbal Singh was allotted to Adilabad circle for practical training (as ARO).

After the practical training, he was posted to the Kodimial Range of Karimnagar West Division in April 1981. Then he was posted to Mahabubabad Range in April 1985. Then he joined as FRO, R& D circle, Hyderabad within the head office. He worked as FRO, MEP circle, Hyderabad in 1988 and worked there up to 1992 and as FRO, Vigilance, Hyderabad in 1993. He was posted as Research Range Officer in July 1994 with State Silviculturist Hyderabad and worked at Mulug till 1998. He was promoted to the cadre of Asst. Conservator of Forests in 1999 and posted as Sub DFO, Laxetipet of Mancherial Division. Later he worked at Manugur of Paloncha Division till 2004. He was posted as DFO, HMDA in 2004 and worked there on deputation till 2009. Then he worked as Deputy Director, AP Forest Academy, Dulapally, from 2009 till retirement in April 2011.

Sri Sardar Iqbal Singh was married to Smt Manjeet Kaur, and the couple had a daughter, Dr Mrs Toushith Kaur, MDS., running her own Dental Clinic in Trimulgherry, Secunderabad and a son, Amandeep Singh, who is pursuing Chartered Accountancy.

Sri Sardar Iqbal Singh has been serving the Association of the Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh as Auditor for the past four years and was again re-elected unanimously on 27.3.2022 to serve in the present body. It was a significant loss to the Association as well. He was very simple, sincere, affectionate, extremely humble, down to earth, honest and a dedicated officer. His superiors and subordinates alike much endeared him. He was known as a fun-loving person with sharp wit and humour. He will be fondly remembered by his wife, daughter, son, associates, friends, relatives, and batchmates.

MAY GOD BLESS HIS NOBLE SOUL TO REST IN PEACE.

-Thayyab.



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If Undelivered, Please return to: Editor, VANA PREMI, Office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Aranya Bhavan, 5th Floor, Room No.514, Saifabad, Hyd - 500 004, T.S.

Date of Publication: 26-4-2022 Total Pages: 60 Date of Posting: 4th or 5th of Every Month.

Printed & Published by **Qamar Mohd. Khan** on behalf of **Association of Retired Forest Officers**,
Printed at **Venu Graphics**, D.No.2-1-392/1/6, Fever Hospital Signal, Nallakunta, Hyderabad-500044 and
Published from Room No. 514, 5th Floor, Aranya Bhavan, Hyderabad-500004. Editor: **Qamar Mohd. Khan**.
RNI Regd. No. Teleng/2000/2185 | Maecenas Editor: **Mohd Thayyab** | Email: thayyab@gmail.com | Ph: 99890 95939