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Chital (Spotted deer)
(Axis axis)

Photo: T.S. Prasanna Kumar

JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FOREST OFFICERS, TELANGANA & ANDHRA PRADESH

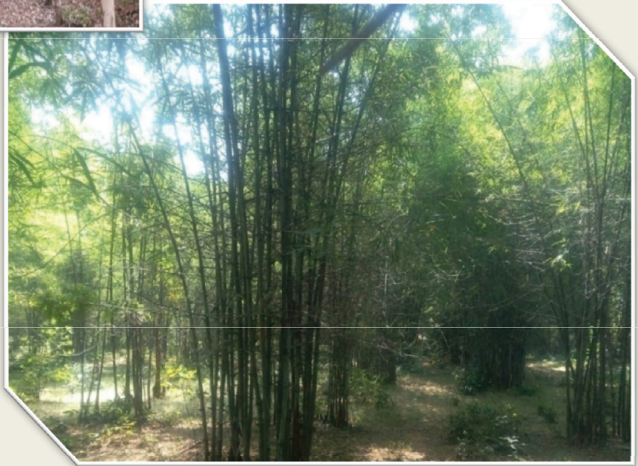
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- ❖ The TSFDC has also taken up the challenging task of Eco-Tourism development in the State. Already open to public - Botanical Garden and Pala Pitta Cycling Park at Kondapur, Mahavir Nischalvan Eco-Tourism Centre, Vanasthalipuram, Aranya at Shameerpet Deer Park and Mrugavani at National Park, Chilkur are attracting increasing number of visitors.
- ❖ TSFDC is also developing Urban Parks in LGM Pet, Thumukunta RF & Gowdelli PC Kalan & PC Khurd cluster and Chilkur RF.
- ❖ TSFDC has introduced new commercial species with in the RRR region viz., Seethaphal, Sandal wood, Red sandal, Rose wood, Teak, Casuarina jhunjiniana etc.,

VICE CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR

Telangana State Forest Development Corporation Ltd.,
(A Government of Telangana State Undertaking)
Botanical Garden, Gate.No.2, Masjid Banda Road, Kothaguda Post Office, Kondapur,
Ranga Reddy, Dist: 500 084, Telephone No.040-23395750/23392652, e-Mail: vcmd.tsfdcl@gmail.com

Editor : Mohammad Thayyab

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

(Regd. No.557/1990)

President : Sri P.K. Jha, IFS(R)
Mobile: 98499 04774

Vice President: Sri G. Krishna Murthy
Mobile: 88977 28528

Secretary : Sri B.M. Swami Das
Mobile: 90008 17781

Jt. Secretary : Sri A. Shankaran
Mobile: 94940 19595

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2. Sri J.V. Sharma, IFS(R), 94413 19151
3. Sri Qamar Mohammed Khan, 98492 33624

Editorial Board

1. President: Ex-Officio President of Assn.,
2. Editor: **Mohammad Thayyab**
Tel: 040-3592445, 99890 95939
e-mail: thayyab@gmail.com
3. Associate Editor: **D.Nagabhushanam, IFS(R)**
Mobile: 80965 11200

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Editorial:

The Joy of Giving

“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.” - *Winston S. Churchill.*

A lady who was travelling alone in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream. The next day she met another hungry traveller; the woman opened her bag to share her food. The hungry traveller saw the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him. She did so without hesitation. The traveller left, rejoicing in his great fortune. He knew the stone was worth enough to provide him with security for a lifetime. But a few days later, he returned to return the stone to the woman.

“I’ve been thinking,” he said, “I know how valuable the stone is, but I give it back in the hope that you can give me something even more precious. **Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me the stone.**”

The woman smiled, “The joy of giving!” (-Author: Unknown)

Joy or happiness is a state of mind. It is a feeling that keeps people healthy and fit. Kahlil Gibran has well said, “I slept, and I dreamed that life is all joy. I woke, and I saw that life is all service. I served, and I saw that service is joy.” Yes, it is a secret barter where we give something we have and receive happiness without asking for it. However, we should not expect anything in return when we give something. One should give with all of one’s heart and forget about it. The noteworthy thing is that we’re most happy when our act of giving has no selfish motives.

We are all born as takers. Because we depend entirely on others during our first few years of life, we tend to be takers by default. However, living as a taker is not a desirable thing. It devalues the essence of who we are as people. To put it mildly, the guy who suffers from this disorder is unpleasant to be around. If that character flaw is nurtured into adulthood, it develops into avarice.

The thrill of taking should be followed by the joy of giving on the journey we call life.

Money and happiness are two things most of us spend our time thinking about, either trying to earn or increase them. And many of us resonate with this phrase; we see it in religions and self-help books: ‘money can’t buy happiness. And in fact, that’s wrong! We can get happiness by giving away our hard-earned money to the needy!!!

Giving is a skill that needs to be developed over time. It will grow into a generous spirit as you get older. Generous people give their time, talents, and abilities to others. They contribute out of goodness, volunteer, and support deserving causes. Giving has to be learned and cultivated throughout life. In adulthood, it will transform into a spirit of generosity. Generous people share their talents, skills, and time with others. They volunteer, support worthy causes, and give out of the goodness of their heart.

Takers, on the other hand, are self-centred, they consider how an action will benefit them, but they do give occasionally—they donate what they no longer desire and then make a big deal out of it, bragging to everyone about what wonderful, kind, and generous givers they are.

Giving shifts our attention from ourselves to someone or something else. Giving becomes a concrete means for us to show others our care and affection. We feel delighted when we fulfil the needs of others or help to meet their requirement. Giving makes us care again about other people. Numerous groups, institutions, and individuals are involved in admirable acts of altruism. We all are aware of Narayanan Krishnan, an Indian management graduate from Madurai who left his position as a chef at a five-star hotel after observing a man who was so hungry that he was subsisting on his excreta. Krishnan then launched his admirable project

to feed thousands of hungry and homeless people in his state -free of cost.

Giving from the heart truly brings joy into your life and feeds your soul. Giving offers a more significant intrinsic benefit than the gift itself. Giving helps you to transcend your physical limitations by removing you from yourself. Giving without expecting anything in return is where true happiness is found.

Only those who have been moved by compassion will extend themselves to assist others. Everybody has something to offer. Each of us has something valuable to offer someone else. There are only so many things you can give away with the majority of stuff in this world. Thankfully, kindness and generosity are not constrained by the same material concerns, which makes the art of giving genuinely delightful. When we see someone as one of us and not just as a service provider, we can offer them a cup of tea, a drink of water, or even a glass of electricity without being asked. At times a word of appreciation, a nod or a simple smile is all it needs to bring immense joy to the face of the other person. Why are we becoming so introverted these days?

The joy of giving lasts longer than the joy of getting. The happiness we feel after a particular event or activity diminishes each time we experience that event, a phenomenon known as hedonic adaptation. But giving to others may be the exception to this rule, according to research in Psychological Science.

According to a study by Associate Professor of Neuroeconomics and Social Neuroscience Philippe Tobler, "The quantity spent did not matter; planning to give away just a tiny bit of money had the same benefits on happiness as giving away a lot." It is important to remember that even seemingly insignificant things can have a positive impact, like bringing coffee to coworkers in the morning. How long these nice sentiments follow being generous is not yet known. However, another study indicates that developing a habit of generosity may affect long-term welfare and enjoyment.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that giving is a powerful tool for personal development and long-lasting enjoyment. The scientific study offers compelling facts to support this claim. We now know that giving engages the same brain regions that are excited by food and sex - thanks to fMRI technology. Altruism is encoded in the brain and is enjoyable, according to experiments. The key to leading a life that is not just happier but also healthier, wealthier, more productive, and meaningful may just lie in helping others.

We actively avoid confronting the upsetting. Our distorted perspective of society is one factor contributing to this apparent disinterest. We are all aware of the unbelievable corruption, and insatiable greed of "certain" politicians, bureaucrats, businesspeople, and industrialists skilled at robbing the needy and the poor.

Giving has never made someone poor. Since giving is love in action, make an effort to be loving. Giving from the heart without expecting anything in return is the purest definition of delight in giving. True giving and happiness have a close relationship; both originate from a place in our souls. The joy of giving is all about giving others an abundance of love, serenity, happiness, and unconditional and sustainable contentment. Moving from a taker to a giver mentality purifies the mind and offers great joy. "If you ask why people give, the readiest answers offer clues to the mystery- 'I feel better about myself.' In the words of Winston Churchill, "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.

It's sickening if we lend a hand to others just to gain acceptance and admiration. We may experience cognitive issues if we act modestly so that others will think we are kind and humble. When we contribute, we should reflect on whether it is genuinely out of a desire to help others or a want to have others compliment our generosity. Happiness is a decision, and it significantly depends on our motivation. Without sincere and honest intentions, we can never be happy. We can give anything we want, but if it doesn't come from the heart, we will end up doing more so that we can get the respect and admiration of others.

Ever notice how happy you feel when you give? Giving is undoubtedly among the best investments one can make in order to experience true happiness. Genuine altruism is giving without expecting anything in return. There is no substitute for this sensation, which shows up as compassion and generosity, other than the fact that it makes you feel good. The most important factor is your giving's purpose. When the intentions are the right ones, they produce a pattern of happiness, joy, trust, and love in your life that goes beyond anything you could have ever imagined. The purpose should always be to bring happiness to both the giver and the receiver.

Helping someone in need by giving doesn't require a specific time! All we need is a heartfelt of fellow feeling, and then every day can be a *'helping day'*! However, our empathy for others seems to diminish in this modern, fast-paced world, where many of us are forced to lead hurried, mechanical and demanding lives. Our increasingly self-centred lifestyles prevent us from looking past our individual and narrow shells and really seeing people who need our help.

As stated above, too often, we undervalue the ability of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the simplest act of caring, all of which have the capacity to change a life. All that is required from our comfortable and busy life is a modest helping hand and a loving heart to think about the elderly parents, children, and homeless. Can we give generously to those who are most in need to spread a little happiness and hope? Together, we can change things.

We are a privileged few and hence should extend our helping hand to the kids that are homeless, donate items we take for granted, such toiletries, food, bed linens, blankets, home items, rice bags, oil, and cereals, to help people live more comfortably and with dignity. To put a smile on their worn-out faces and enjoy the feel-good moment, we should do whatever is possible for the less privileged -from our side *"for our sake."*

We can assist with educating those who are less fortunate since "a child without education is like a bird without wings." Life can be full of pleasant and heartwarming surprises, so be prepared for that. Our perspective on life has shifted as a result of the pandemic. In 2018, the top three crowdfunding sites in India—Ketto, Milaap, and ImpactGuru—raised \$2.7 billion (Rs. 271.65 crore) from the general public, who were concerned over the suffering of people. Our small donation thus made a lot of difference and filled us with a sense of giving back to the society we are part of.

Eli Wiesel said, "The opposite of love is not hate; it is indifference". And when it comes to philanthropy, the opposite of doing good is not doing bad - it is inertia. Doing something or anything is invariably better than doing nothing as long as you are committed to learning from your experiences. In his book, 'The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success,' Dr Deepak Chopra emphasizes that the intention behind our giving and receiving is the most important thing. When the act of giving is joyful, unconditional, and from the heart, the energy behind the giving increases many times. But if we give grudgingly, there is no energy behind that giving. If we feel we have lost something through the act of giving, then the gift is not truly given and will not cause an increase. The gifts of caring, attention, affection, appreciation, and love are some of the most precious gifts we can give, and they don't cost anything.

"I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver" – Maya Angelou.

Society frequently tells us that we need more to be happy—more money, more Jewellery, more property, higher positions, more of everything. However, there is no evidence that this is beneficial to humans. Because there is a connection between giving and the satisfaction we want, we wind up working and seeking more and more, which leaves us feeling dissatisfied and frustrated. It has nothing to do with how much you have if you want to be happy. Contrarily, it depends on how much you're willing to part with.

Now – to extend a helping hand- one can start with a known good organization in the service of the needy.

The help of friends and relatives can be taken if they know and/ or would recommend any specific NGO/ project or initiative - This is always a great way to get started because our friends/ relatives would have done some due diligence before connecting us to an organization. Asking for leads on social media will allow friends to tag experts and quickly get you three-four good leads to pursue. Browsing through GuidestarIndia.org, GiveIndia.org, CAFIndia.org etc., for more information about a few organizations in the areas of our interest. GiveIndia and CAFIndia also allow one to donate online to these organizations. One can visit NGOs nearby (we can find them through a simple Google Search or searching directories like Justdial.com, Sulekha.com or another Yellow Pages). Visiting organizations personally is the best way to get a “feel” for their work, the people, and the culture and therefore get a sense of whether it is an organization or a cause we would like to get involved with. We can volunteer for a few opportunities, either at identified organizations or simply with a group of friends.

It is widely accepted that compassion is a two-way street. Despite all the grief, hardship, and suffering in this world, we have countless opportunities to lend a hand and change things for the better. Act kindly in advance. Pay attention to those around you and consider how you might slightly ease their burdens. Give your time. One of the best ways to enhance the lives of others is through community service. Give to a good cause. Donate Unused Items. Help out at a neighbourhood school. Assist a food bank. Make a neighbourhood park or beach cleaner. Impart knowledge to someone. Help out a local senior home or animal shelter. There is a waiting, a wanting world out there. Never is enough, ever enough. One can never do enough. ‘Since you get more joy out of giving joy to others, you should put a good deal of thought into the happiness that you are able to give’ - *Eleanor Roosevelt*.

Dalai Lama says, “Giving material goods is one form of generosity, but one can extend an attitude of generosity into all one’s behaviour. Being kind, attentive and honest in dealing with others, offering praise where it is

due, giving comfort and advice where they are needed, and simply sharing one’s time with someone — all these are forms of generosity, and they do not require any particular level of material wealth.”

Everyone can’t be Mother Teresa or Mahatma, but everyone wants peace at heart, and giving is definitely one way to provide the joy of innate satisfaction. Rumi, the mystic poet, narrated this incident of a man who, walking past a beggar, asked, “Why, God, do you not do something for these people?” God replied, “I did do something. I made you.”

The journey of life is the shortest thing in the universe, and if we can’t make it beneficial for the people who need it, the goal of humanity’s trip to Earth is insufficient. This is a universal reality. Everyone has learned to live their own lives but occasionally attempts to live for others. We will experience a rush and a precious satisfaction that cannot adequately explain. “No one is looser in this world who lightens the burden of another”. What do we get in return? Happiness, peace, self-respect, love, Emotions & moments to remember. It’s always a good feeling to feel great, which we cannot buy through money.

It is a proven fact that generosity makes us happier persons. Life is best when we build bridges between people, not walls. The world would have been a better place if there were helping people. When we help others find hope, we end up inspiring ourselves at the same time. Try to spread love; life is too short. It’s a pity that some youth, some working, and many retired people are wasting their time and energies on social media platforms by creating or by busily forwarding controversial hate content against religions, political parties, or personalities they know nothing about or indulge in false propaganda on controversial topics instead of spending their knowledge and energies in the service of the less privileged and the needy. They can educate the children on the clean and green, conservation of nature, wildlife, environmental issues etc.

Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day! As Warren Buffett has rightly said. "If you're in the luckiest one per cent of humanity, you owe it to the rest of humanity to think about the other ninety-nine per cent."

Money does not define a person's character or value.

Kindness does. Don't miss out on one of the best parts of being human: we have evolved to find joy in helping others. Let's stop thinking about giving as just this moral obligation and start thinking of it as a source of pleasure! Let's practice and commit our lives to give joy.

Try it! It works!!

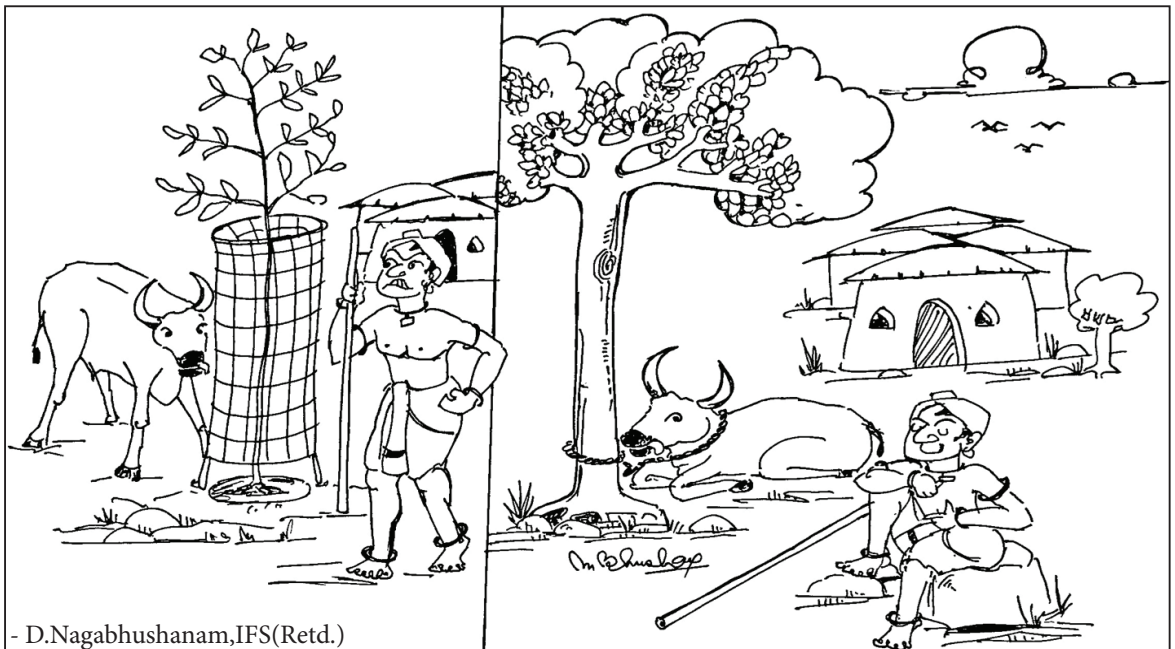
-Mohd. Thayyab.

WANT TO WRITE FOR VANAPREMI?

You tried and stuck? Wrote something but didn't publish? Spending valuable time forwarding the someone's posts or hate content from one group to another group in social media or simply not interested in anything? But now you can share your real talent with us!

We are planning to accommodate your writeup in VanaPremi: Tell us about an unforgettable incident that you came across in your life/career, "MY READ" a good book you read recently, "MOVIERIFIC" a good movie you watched and recommend others to watch, "WEBSHOT" a useful website you came across, "YONDER", "WAYFARER" and "BONA BELLA" memorable place you have toured and planning to travel again, "SAVORLY" a recipe you have tasted, "AWE AND WONDER" an anecdote, practical joke or funny incident across your workplace, a practical joke you want to share, "CHIRPYKIDS" an incident with your child or grandchild that amazed you, "PICTORIAL" a memorable photograph you want to share with details....and the list is endless.

Come out with a small writeup (in your own words preferably in MS word format -600 to 1400 words) and share with all of us and preserve your memories. **-EDITOR.**



- D.Nagabhusanam, IFS(Retd.)

Letters to the Editor-November

On 'Remember Dudhwa Beyond the Shadow of Tiger'

Dear Sir,

Ref to the article "Remember Dudhwa Beyond the Shadow of Tiger" by Mohammad Ashan, IFS (Retd) in the VP of Oct, 2022 a special issue on wildlife.

The article starts with an introduction on the wealth of wild animals, forest types and the landscape of the Dudhwa NP and the mindset of tourists to have a glimpse of the dame of Indian Jungles tiger in their visit for one or two days in vain without enjoying the nature.

The author has poetically described the natural beauty of the forests and the denizens in Dudhwa in the midst of the forests with descriptions of their interface in the Sun light, moon light, stars' light, mist, breez wind and rain and the flowing of water in the river.

The descriptions are so clear like the poetic descriptions of the nature. It makes the readers to visualise the worth of forests and their repositories; it also reminds the old memories of the poems of the greats like..John Keats, JB Shelley and Wordsworth on nature.

The author is a real poet in the midst of the Indian Forest fraternity.

Great of his poetic talent.

BMT Rajeev IFS (Retd)

Bengaluru.

On 'Kuno National Park is not yet ready for cheetahs Introduction'

The analysis of the tiger population densities in different Tiger Reserves of India with reference to the different types of habitats- their forest cover and carrying capacities to sustain prey base for the tigers and increase in tiger population and their dispersal by Dr Uma Shankar Singh, IFS (Retd) in article- 32 TRs show decline in forest cover in India- in the Vana Premi of 9/2022 is very interesting.

He has coated a lot of researchers' data and WII's reports to arrive at his opinion on the status of 52 TRs in India and the future strategies to sustain increasing population of the tigers.

His opinion in suggesting to people to tolerate the presence of tigers in the neighborhoodand to the govt to liberalise and enhance the compensation for tiger kills/injuries and destruction of crops by their prey animals etc... will not work in the long run. Some of the Premiere TRs are at the climax and some are infested with exotic weeds, and many are prone to fires...

I am of the opinion that the management practices being rigidly followed for 5 decades in TRs need to be changed to suit the TRs' conditions to re-vigourate the carrying capacity of the TRs in terms of herbivores with manipulation of vegetation to maintain different stages of vegetation to meet diverse requirements of the diverse wild animals.

BMT Rajeev, IFS (Retd)

Former DD, Bandipur TR

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in VanaPremi are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of the Association of the Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and AP or its members. - EDITOR.



Broad basing the role of Indian Forest Service (IFS) – Way forward

P. Mallikharjuna Rao, IFS (Retd.)

Forests are ecosystems with diverse flora, fauna and its habitat with complex inter relationships created by nature through ecological succession. Forests are essential for watershed protection, soil conservation, bio-shielding from natural disasters, climate amelioration, soil conservation, pollution control, biodiversity conservation, livelihoods enhancement, food security, cultural linkages and various other ecosystem services. The central theme of forestry should be to retain, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore these natural systems in order to secure these services. Mere growing of trees ignoring various other elements, processes and services therefore would not be forestry but it can be called as arboriculture or with some other appropriate name. The activities outside the natural forests pertaining to growing and managing the trees (Social forestry, agro forestry, urban forestry etc.), the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity (ex situ conservation and other) necessitate a differentiated management strategy. In the absence of a unified perspective on forestry among the foresters my understanding goes in this fashion.

This discussion is in consequence to the interactions with a few IFS probationers and deliberations with the batch mates of retired IFS (1985 batch) held in a senior forester's workshop conducted at Indira Gandhi National Forest academy (IGNFA), Dehradun on 10-11, October, 2022. There were a few interesting ideas, insights and concerns shared in this well organised meet which prompted me to write this piece of article. This is attempted mainly to clarify certain doubts raised by a few IFS probationers.

All India Service for Forest Management - Relevance:

Indian Administrative Service being a multifunctional service with a mandate to look after wide gamut of

organisations at various levels is justified to be a leading All India Service (AIS). The Police as regulatory and law enforcing agency of the Government with a mandate of public peace and order, internal security, prevention and control of crimes, intelligence etc., and has a very large public interface warrants to be managed by a premier AIS in the form of Indian Police Service. Is forestry an important sector to justify its management under such type of a premier All India Service? The answer is affirmative on account of several grounds. As forest being a vast resource covering more than one fifth of the geographical area distributed in entire length and breadth of the country, its management deserves to be under a competent professional body of an All India Service. The interstate and transboundary issues of forest management, smuggling, anti - poaching activities, migration of wild animals and environmental impact cutting across the whole nation warrant creation of an AIS. For effective coordination and management of multiple and varied disciplines of forestry require an important service with qualities of good leadership. Since forestry has significant influence on wide range of development sectors and nature of its cross sectoral linkages, the role of a competent professional service becomes relevant. For instance, important sectors/agencies having dependence and linkages with forestry are: tribal welfare (livelihoods, NTFP management, forest rights act), agriculture (agri inputs and agro forestry), animal husbandry (grazing management, fodder supplies), health (medicinal plants), industries (raw material supplies and management), water resources (catchment protection, water shed management), endowment (sacred groves, temple eco-parks), urban bodies (urban forestry), panchayat raj (village nurseries, village woodlots), rural development (forest livelihoods, wood crafts), tourism (ecotourism, eco parks), roads and high ways

(avenue plantations), mining (rehabilitation of mined areas), education (environment education) and other sectors. This provides an opportunity to the members of forest service to play active role as a nodal agency and to optimise the significant contribution of forestry to the society and nation. With high rate of forest dependence (about 400 million people are dependent on forest, TERI, 2015) and being one of the lowest per capita forest areas (0.06 Ha) in the world, the forest management becomes a great challenge and justifies the presence of an AIS. Forestry has role both in management of natural forests and outside. The existence of trees, wildlife and biodiversity outside the forest is in significant proportion and therefore it requires appropriate management inputs from foresters.

Forest management- the role of IFS:

The founding fathers felt an imperative to introduce an All India Service for forest management in 1966 in order to facilitate a good interstate coordination, uniformity of approach in forest management, foster broad national interests and to provide good leadership to the forest management in the country. However, while operationalising the service, the administration did not take corresponding steps to restructure the state forest organisations and reform the roles and responsibilities to place appropriately and utilise the full potential of the newly created service. Initially the IFS occupied the space of the state services and well-adjusted to the culture and systems of the state forest organisations without any room to create significant change. It can be said that instead of influencing the functioning of forest management and governance structures radically, the service got assimilated fully into the organisation culture and functioning style of Forest Departments.

Forest departments of different states have good, unique and unparalleled strengths such as trained and disciplined field functionaries, standardised operating procedures, well defined accountability, strict codal provisions for financial and human resource management and other. There are several field functionaries in the department who work with a lot of commitment, dedication and enthusiasm. In spite of the large number of vacancies, the field staff are

taking extra burden and trying to do good work in forest protection and other works assigned to them. The officers of the state forest services and below are highly efficient and competent as compared to the similar ranks in any other state government departments in general. In such a kind of organisation if IFS dons the role of a leader in forest management by way of influencing, conceiving and formulating right forest policies, planning appropriate strategies, establishing quality management systems instead of simply duplicating and/or replacing the work of state services, the results would be wonderful.

Forestry covers the full chain of forest management operations starting from policy formulation, strategic planning, supervision, governance, execution and delivery of services. Disassociation from the active and leading role in policy formulation and strategic planning on forestry matters is a deviation from the intended objective of creating the Forest Service. Forest service as the leader and nodal agency of governance of forestry matters is supposed to own, initiate and take full responsibility in drafting policies and legislations pertaining to forestry matters at both nation and state levels. The inaction of the service and shirking away from the responsibility provided space for the non-foresters to formulate the policies that have significant impact on the forestry. It is not wrong on the part of political leadership to take a decision to address and correct the historical injustice of not recognising the rights of the scheduled tribes and forest dwellers while notifying the forests. A right kind of policy and strategy should follow. Had IFS at the helm taken the initiative and responsibility to draft the act and rules, the interests of both the genuine rights of forest dwellers and forest conservation would have been served in a balanced manner. After all, forest conservation benefits primarily the tribals and forest dwellers. However, the responsibility of drafting the act and laws was handed over to the non-foresters who proposed a concept of cut-off date to decide the claims of rights which poses a constant and big challenge to adhere strictly to the spirit of law and prevent misuse of the act (Forest

Rights Act,2006) by outsiders at implementation level. Similarly, in the name of promoting bamboo cultivation on large scale and to expand livelihood opportunities, the bamboo was declared as horticultural produce and removed from the ambit of forest laws in the light of passive participation or silence from the forest service. There was however, no significant expansion of bamboo cultivation taken place but resulted in to problems of protecting bamboo resources in natural forest with adverse effect on 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). There are now initiatives to formulate new policies, strategies and laws pertaining to agro forestry and ecotourism by non-foresters which are likely to create significant impact on protection and management of forests. It is time to prepare the Indian Forest Service to play proactive and leading role in policy matters failing which any amount of efforts at execution and implementation level will not be of much use.

Issues of forest management at field level - clarification:

An attempt is made here to share the replies on certain issues on forest management at field level flagged during discussions with IFS probationers.

One commonly held view among the foresters is that forest service is a specialist category of service. In my opinion forester is generalist as he has to take care of the entire spectrum of forest management involving planning, regulation, protection, execution, sustainable utilisation, monitoring, personnel management, and people's participation. Added to this, the multiplicity of roles of forester as police, magistrate, engineer, accountant, human resource manager, tribal welfare officer etc., bring the foresters close to the class of generalists with special knowledge on forestry.

It is always useful for the foresters to know about plants, animals, rocks, minerals, soils and other natural objects in the forest as they not only aid in developing passion towards forestry profession but also helpful to

forestry. What is more important is that knowing about their ecological and management aspects besides governance and people's participation to become a good and efficient forester. Some people are of view that forest service should focus more on excelling in science and technical aspects on forestry to create a good impact. This is not correct as the forest service is not created for pursuing mere research and academics in forestry but giving good leadership to the forest management covering wide range of activities. There is a separate cadre of forest scientists and academicians who are involved in this field and their services can be utilised for supporting forest management.

With multidisciplinary nature, the forestry opens up specialisation in different areas such as wildlife, social forestry, biodiversity conservation, geomatics, eco development, ecotourism etc., The emerging areas such as climate change, valuation of ecosystem services etc., are the new avenues of specialisation. Forestry provides good scope for the members to specialise and develop expertise in any field of forestry of their interest. The initial phase of forest service (first 10 years) should be to excel in general administration of forest and later focus can be given to specialisation. Specialisation becomes more relevant if member works in the same field and makes a good contribution. There were occasions in the past that a few members preferred to work in general administration of forestry but pursue their specialisation for academic purposes.

There are many good attributes of the organisation culture of state forest departments which would be useful and to be followed. But a few practices of the forest departments need relook, improvement and reforms so as to stay relevant to the present day requirements. The methods and practices requiring change are: isolated to integrated method, compartmentalised to collaborative working, process to result orientation, reactive to proactive approach, routine to innovative way, rigidity to flexibility, regulatory to participatory management and other.

The attributes of quick decision making, problem-solving, risk taking, team building and motivating the fielded functionaries will facilitate good forest management.

The qualities of positivity, creativity, adaptability, empathy will contribute to the good performance. Foresters should be polite but not subservient while dealing with others. Assertiveness and confidence are the essential traits to be nurtured among the members of forest service. Commitment to community based approaches and the skills required to promote active participation of the people, civil society and various other stakeholders need honing. As forestry is now recognised to have more interface, interdependence and linkages with various other sectors it would become necessary to develop skills pertaining to coordination and collaborative management with various organisations. It is needless to emphasise time and again that the Forest Service has to play proactive role in policy making which requires analytical skills, critical thinking and creativity.

Forestry is not a finance driven activity. More than the quantum of finances, the right allocation, timely availability and operational flexibility play important role. There are so many non-financial inputs which will show positive influence on forest management.

Forest Service provides good platform to contribute to sustainable forest management and service to the forest dependent communities and the society. No other profession can match with forestry which provides a rare and unique experience of living and working with nature that affects the whole life on the earth. It is true that once time will be gone it will never come back. It is therefore important to the members of the forest service to do their best at every moment of their service. Every forester when he retires should have a store house of stories to share with their grandchildren about their good work and substantial contribution to forestry and people.

Perspective plan for Indian Forest Service:

Sri Prashant Kumar, a member of the committee formed to support and guide in formulation of a perspective plan for the Indian Forest Service (IFS) has explained regarding deliberations held on certain issues.

Several members of the Forest Service made significant contributions to various areas of the forestry such as

forest protection, wildlife conservation, joint forest management, social forestry promotion, urban forestry, biodiversity conservation, forest survey and geomatics and other with their individual efforts. The Service also made immense contribution in various non-forestry sectors such as rural development, tribal welfare, women empowerment, watershed management, horticulture, fisheries, rural water supplies, tourism, medicinal plants, lakes conservation and other both at state and nation levels with remarkable impact.

It is essential to expand the mandate of the Forest Service from mere management of forest and wildlife to cover wide spectrum of environment related sectors such as climate change, pollution control, watershed development, coastal zone management, wetlands management, biodiversity conservation, rejuvenation of rivers etc., so as to utilise the full potential of the Service. The members of the Service are to be given the leading role in the organisations/agencies associated with these activities both at centre and states.

The forest service suffers from redundancy and underutilisation at senior level and identity at junior level. Forest departments being monolithic organisations, all powers and responsibilities are vested in a single institution at apex level i.e., PCCF and Head of Forest Force. Other posts held by senior IFS officers at Head Quarters play only supportive role without any scope to contribute on their own. This has several demerits. The rich experience, exposure and talent of the senior officers gets underutilised. It is also not economical and effective to use the highly paid senior AIS officers with good calibre and expertise to just assist a single officer. The reorganisation of the Forest Department with creation of independent agencies of some subjects such as social forestry, ecotourism, urban forestry, zoos and eco-parks management will not only solve this problems mentioned here but also helps to make significant contribution in those areas. There are some more wings in the Department such as wildlife, research, training, production, vigilance etc., which are necessary to be continued as part of the department have the potential to be developed as verticals to be headed by senior members of service with reasonable

degree of independence. The problem at junior level can be addressed through appropriate re designation and delegating responsibilities on par with other AIS officers.


In some states the posts of Additional Chief Secretary Principal Secretary/Secretary of Forest and Environment are held by the IFS officers. It is highly justifiable to place IFS officers in these posts to bring in synergy in forestry on one hand and to realise the full potential of forest service on one hand.

It is bewildering to note that there is no proper alignment among the policies, training curricula, research and field practices pertaining to forestry thus adding more perplexity to the forestry objective and direction. A serious inquiry into this and to make necessary corrections is the need of the hour.

Conclusion:

There is an urgent need to bring an unified perspective on forestry among the foresters. Indian Forest Service should take a leading and proactive role in policy making, strategic planning and all forestry matters. Reforms and over hauling of the content, rules, mandate and structure pertaining to trainings, research, management systems, organisation and operating procedures is necessary to facilitate and enable the forest service to take up this kind of responsibility. The role of forest service needs to be widened to cover the entire gamut of forestry and environment matters in order to fully utilize the potential of service. Achieving the best in sustainable management and overall improvement of the forest and environment in the country will be possible only through collective and appropriate transformative action from the Forest Service of the present generation.


(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)



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.
1. T.P. Thimma Reddy	06-11-1956	1. Alan Chong Teron	08-11-1976
2. P.S. Sankar Reddy	09-11-1936	2. Elusing Meru	11-11-1965
3. C. Sivasankara Reddy	10-11-1951	3. P. Ram Mohan Rao	15-11-1962
4. C. Madukar Raj	19-11-1951	4. Anand Kumar Jha	25-11-1969
5. D. Nagagopala Rao	23-11-1952	5. D. Bheema	15-11-1967
6. K. Venkat Ramudu	23-11-1948	6. D.V. Reddy	15-11-1964
7. K. Murali Krishna Rao	29-11-1940	7. G. Mukund Reddy	16-11-1978
8. Solleti Chandra Mouli	30-11-1954	8. V. Prabhakar Rao	26-11-1964
9. P.K. Sharma	01-12-1956	9. K. Damodar Reddy	28-11-1967
		10. Anoop Singh	01-12-1965

- SECRETARY

Any Omissions and Commissions in the Names / Dates may kindly be informed to the Editor over WhatsApp or Email.

KFDC IS A STATE AGENCY

Brij Kishore Singh, IFS, (Retd.)



I held the charge of Managing Director, Karnataka Forest Development Corporation Ltd in 2012-13. Much before I took over the charge of the Corporation, I was conversant with the affairs as a Director on its board in the year 2002-03 while I was working as Managing Director Karnataka Forest Industries Corporation Ltd.

The responsibility of settling Sri Lankan repatriates in Subramanya, Puttur and Sulia taluks of Dakshin Kannada district was accepted by Karnataka Forest Department in late 1960s. Luxuriant tree growth of evergreen species was cleared in nearly 5000 hectare forest area and the lands were utilized for settling the repatriates to establish their colonies, rubber plantations and factories on different locations. Forest department also established exclusive hospital providing minimum health care facilities for the repatriates settled in villages and entrusted the task of plantation works, tapping trees for latex and the processing in the factories.

In order to ensure that the earning from rubber plantations is ploughed back for maintenance and other management activities, Government of Karnataka handed over the entire establishment of rubber sector lock, stock and barrel to Karnataka Forest Plantation Corporation Ltd, which was earlier engaged in managing eucalyptus plantation grown on forest lands and was leased to it. Karnataka Forest Plantation Corporation after taking the control of rubber unit was renamed as Karnataka Forest Development Corporation Ltd (KFDC Ltd).

Being a state agency, it was perfectly justified to pass on the batten of managing rubber plantation areas to KFDC Ltd. Supreme Court of India in Godavaramana judgment has also said that forestry operations especially logging will have to be executed by forest department or state agencies and not by contractors.

In the lands leased to KFDC Ltd, often it is required to take up logging of over-matured rubber trees and pulpwood plantations on maturity. KFDC Ltd fits in the definition of Supreme Court and is justified to take up the operations.

For nearly half a century KFDC Ltd has been having two wings popularly known as (1) Rubber wing and (2) Eucalyptus wing. Cenex, Indian standard natural rubber (ISNR), skim lump, creep sheets and other rubber products from the factories are sold to traders on the prices fixed by the Corporation on daily basis. The fixation of prices is based on rubber board prices and prevailing market situation. When market tumbles the Corporation has to sell the product at prices lower than the breakeven level.

Eucalyptus plantations were managed for two to three coppice rotations and pulpwood was marketed to Industries namely Harihar Polyfibres, West Coast Paper Mills and Mysore Paper Mills. Former two industries often formed ring and many times succeeded in purchasing pulpwood from the Corporation at throw away prices. My experience as Managing Director in 2012 is different. Both the giants Harihar Polyfibres and West Coast Paper Mills had tussled and the pulpwood of KFDC Ltd fetched one of the highest prices till that time. In subsequent years when G V Sugur was Managing Director, pulpwood fetched still higher prices. Still later, I have been told that the prices fell again, owing to the stronger ring formed between the two and some more eucalyptus consuming industries established in recent years.

Whenever the market for eucalyptus and rubber dipped, the Corporation faced difficult financial situation. If it persisted for a longer period, the corporation has to maintain itself from the reserves. There were situations

in the past that the reserves had dried up and the Corporation had to borrow money from banks/ financial institutions to sustain itself and also to maintain older rubber and eucalyptus plantations. Raising fresh plantations were suspended in those years for want of resources.

There has been difficulty in maintaining the sustainability of the Corporation as the yield of rubber and pulpwood fluctuated, owing to the fact that there has been no fresh planting in particular years. Thus, the performance of the corporation in lean years (when rubber and pulpwood prices tanked) had cascading effect and restricted the growth of the Corporation even when the situation was favourable.

The Corporation has been receiving advices from bureaucrats, public and politicians to diversify the activity and to give up eucalyptus. There have been several suggestions to grow tamarind, agave, subabul, bamboo, *Acacia auriculiformis*, *Melia dubia* and many even long rotation timber species like teak, honne, matti etc. Some of these ventures have been tried by KFDC Ltd in the past. The areas leased to the Corporation are unsuitable to grow timber species (duly retaining the existing growth) and thus the same has not been attempted. However, the Corporation has made sincere efforts in growing agave and tamarind on leased forest land in Bengaluru rural, Chickballapur, Kolar, and Tumakur districts. There are several land sharks thriving in this belt and the slow growing species have been made to fail and the lands are encroached. There are instances that tamarind seedlings have been pulled out by the sharks and the land is occupied for cultivation.

KFDC Ltd has funded its tamarind and agave projects by borrowing money from the banks. They have also invested heavily in uprooting old eucalyptus stumps and the irony is that not only the expenditure has become in fructuous but the Corporation has ended up losing control over the leased forest lands. Whenever plantations fail or planted trees are slow growing the land is encroached. The executive staffs of KFDC Ltd are not empowered to bring the encroachers to justice,

Forest department officers will have to step in, issue FIR and take up the proceeding. Since the encroachments are supported by politicians, no concrete action materializes.

Marihal bamboo has been successfully grown by KFDC Ltd on leased forest land in Belgavi and Uttara Kannada districts. I had occasions to visit these plantations and can vouch for a high percentage of success. While working as MD KFDC Ltd, I had tried to sell the bamboo, but it did not fetch price to cover the extraction and transport. The maximum offer I remember to have received was Rs 12 per culm that too buyer was quite unstable in his negotiation. The cost of KFDC Ltd towards land lease rent, growing the plantation and maintenance is quite considerable and is not covered in such meager sale price offered. When KFDC Ltd drew the marihal bamboo project, the extrapolation of costs and benefits were inaccurate and thus marihal bamboo has remained unsold. In fact, we do not find most forestry projects bankable because of long gestation period. The cost of carrying the interest for such long period of time is quite high and difficult to meet from the sale price.

Considering the economics, I decided not to sell it at throw away prices. Also, bamboo is known for quick biomass production and proportionate carbon sequestration, which helps our forest to be more carbon resilient.

EUCALYPTUS CONTROVERSY:

Without proper scientific evidence, eucalyptus in public perception has been most undesirable species and is accused of lowering ground water table and also making the soil acidic. Forest Department has been under attack from public, politicians and bureaucrats from other streams for taking up large scale eucalyptus plantations in forest areas as well as promoting it on farmlands.

Forest department had its own reason for promoting eucalyptus. The plantations do not fail and the department quickly produces biomass in degraded patches. The forests adjoining villages have been

degraded over period of time and if eucalyptus is grown on these lands, villagers can continue to fetch their requirement from even eucalyptus plantations. The natural forests will be saved from further degradation. But for the eucalyptus plantations, we would have lost more natural forests for village and industrial requirements.

Conceding to the demand of public perception, Forest Minister Vijay Shankar in 2010-11 went on to ban planting of Eucalyptus on forest land as well as on leased forest land in control of KFDC Ltd. During 2011 rains, eucalyptus seedlings were supplied to public without properly recovering its cost and even the areas prepared for planting were left fallow. Only 10 ha area in Hassan district was planted with *Melia dubia*. After I took over as MD of the Corporation in early May of 2012, I had an occasion to visit the plantation. Barring a small patch of nearly 3 ha, the plantation had failed within one year. There was no planting program of eucalyptus in 2012 rains as well, owing to the ban imposed by Forest Minister.

There is no other proper species KFDC Ltd could diversify, I moved the Government to relax the ban for KFDC areas on the ground that no other species can be grown quickly, and the areas are prone for encroachments. The matter was referred to State Cabinet and my proposal was approved. KFDC Ltd started planting eucalyptus from 2013 rains onwards, but hit yet another roadblock in 2014, when Deputy Commissioner Kolar stopped planting under pressure from public and their representatives. Soon the news spread in other districts; KFDC Ltd could not sustain the pressure and discontinued planting.

Presently the Corporation is planting Su babul, *Melia bubia*, *Casurina equisetifolia* and *Acacia auriculiformis*. These plantations have not completed first rotation and have not been exploited and marketed. We have to wait for few more years to assess the productivity of any of these plantations at commercial scale.

Let me briefly examine why the protest against eucalyptus was restarted from Kolar in 2014? There are

political heavy weights who win elections by protecting the people illegally occupying the Government lands. Eucalyptus plantation covers up the area quite fast and is less prone for encroachment. Removal of roots from older eucalyptus plantations is expensive and time consuming and most farmers do not afford to do it. On the other hand, when the Forest department takes up the planting of other species on lands where eucalyptus existed earlier, it is ensured that all the stumps are uprooted. In this scenario, when the plantations of other miscellaneous species fail, the area is without any rootstock and can be occupied by farmers. Even if the plantation is partially successful, there are instances that the plants are removed, and the area is encroached.

PLANTATIONS ARE CLIMATE RESILIENT:

The latest ISFR 2021, published by Forest Survey of India has stated that Indian Forests has stored 7.2 Giga tonnes of CO₂ equivalent and it has been growing at the rate of 54 million tonnes of CO₂ annually. Whenever KFDC Ltd makes the final harvest of the plantation at the end of the rotation period, it ensures that the area is replanted in the succeeding monsoon. If a rotation of ten years is maintained for any particular species, only one tenth of the total plantation is harvested; however, the trees will continue to grow in remaining 90% of the area at any point in time resulting in additional carbon sequestration potential.

Fast growing species like eucalyptus and *Acacia auriculiformis* which are successful in plantations uniformly can offer quick carbon sink. The problem arises when the area is encroached for other land uses. Thus, from the climate point of view it is necessary that KFDC Ltd is allowed to raise plantation of fast-growing species which uniformly covers all corners of land.

Let KFDC Ltd takes a pledge of greening all areas under lease from Forest Department. The globe has warmed by 1.1^o C after industrialization began. The burning of fossil fuel (coal, oil and gas) for industries, transportation and mobility has been increasing the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere. It is a

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Rescue Operation of a Foot Trapped Leopard in Meerut District

Hemanth Kumar, IFS., & Sushant Sharma, IFS.,

It was in the early morning on 13th February 2014, when a villager informed about the sighting of a leopard in Jaroda village near Kithore, Meerut District. He was talking agitatedly and was beyond comprehension. A couple of minutes later, another caller, who happened to be a local village Doctor was able to inform us that the leopard had got its right front leg trapped in a leg hold trap, which he claimed that, had been put to catch jackals by a particular community of *Saperas*. The Range Officer, Parikshit Garh, stationed about 12 km from the spot, was asked to rush to the spot immediately with nets, a cage, and whatever manpower he had then. The idea was to trap the already confined animal by covering it with a large fishnet, strong enough to restrict a Leopard at the earliest possible. In the meantime, the District Administration and Police were briefed to take care of the Law-and-Order situation. Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) who have been very helpful in such cases of animal rescue in the past were contacted over the telephone immediately for the rescue operation. Dr. NVK Ashraf who happened to be in Assam at that time informed us that he would arrange for the rescue operation immediately. We came to know later that

since, the WTI, Uttar Pradesh Carnivore Conservation Project team had already been deployed in Moradabad to address the tiger conflict, the WTI team from their Head Quarters, NOIDA was arranged for the rescue operation.

The Range Officer, after reaching the spot at about 08:00 hrs, informed that there were at least 250 people on the spot already and some of them were dangerously close to the leopard. The Leopard, who was calm earlier, was now getting restless and agitated. People were taking photos and making video clips from mobiles and the situation was not under the control of a few Police/Forest people present there. The place was getting rowdier and noisier minute by minute. The Leopard was under a lot of stress, and it must have sensed the danger to its life, in one go, It mustered all its strength and managed to break the chain of the trap, injuring one person on the way, and escaped into a nearby sugarcane field with the trap still attached on its leg. Now, this changed the situation dramatically. What would have been an easy task of putting the net over the animal had turned into a very



Figure 1: The crowd gathered around the sugarcane field.

difficult task of tracing an injured and furious Leopard in a sugarcane field of about an acre. Almost immediately, the field the Leopard had jolted into, was surrounded by people from all sides, thereby blocking nearly every possible Exit Point for the poor animal.

After a little bit of coordination work, when the SDO and I reached the spot at about 09:30 hrs, there were at least one thousand people there. They wanted us to come with cages, guns, nets, etc. When we told the villagers about our plans to rescue the Leopard, they were not willing to listen. There was some jostling around and unpleasant words thrown at the forest staff. They were furious and shouting a lot at us. By the looks on their faces, I was sure that they wanted the Leopard dead. WTI team would reach earliest by 13:00 hours. We had to somehow, make these three hours with ensuring no casualties to the Leopard and the human lives present there. There was sufficient staff from the local administration, police, and forest departments on the spot now. As we were sure that the animal was within the field, so to restrict it from going away, the field was covered from three sides by nets. We tried to cordon off the area but there was a continuous inflow of people, now from the nearby villages as well. During this process, despite stopping hard, one local went inside the field looking for the Leopard. The animal, sensing the danger and in its defense injured the person mildly.

Now it was just the policy to watch, wait, and pacify the people until the expert team arrived. By One o'clock the crowd must have amounted to about 3,000. There was utter chaos and people; including women & children were not willing to listen to the request of the local administration, police, and forest officials. They were too close to Leopard's hideout to be safe.

The WTI team consisting of Abhishek Narayanan, Tensin Norsang, and Reetika Maheshwary reached the spot at about 14:30 hrs. At the time, locals from nearby villages had surrounded the sugarcane field in which the leopard was moving in. The team made a quick survey of the spot and discussed the strategy with the Government officials present there. After looking at the situation and the resources available, the WTI was

of the view that in this case, they would have to go for Chemical Capture, i.e by tranquilizing the animal. The forest department had mobilized a trap cage and large fishnets to capture the animal. With great efforts from the police, a large section of the crowd was moved away. However, a group of local electronic and print media persons along with some locals just didn't budge.

Chemical Capture

After about an hour of discussing strategies and readying the tranquilizing darts, two teams ventured into the field, one on a JCB machine and another on a TATA 407. Due to little visibility in the field, the team decided to search for the injured leopard in the sugarcane field using two JCB bulldozers that can flush the animal out. The sugarcane field had to be cleared out for which the owner would be given compensation by the Forest Department. The chemical capture team decided to climb onto the excavator of the JCB, to get a vantage point to tranquilize the animal.

The civil administration was instructed to move all the non-project personnel far away from the field to avoid any mishap. Only after the civil administration completely cleared locals from the field, did two teams (one search team and one tranquilizing team) enter the field using one truck and one JCB bulldozer at around 15:30 hrs. Upon locating the animal, the first dart was administered at 16:15 hrs using a pneumatic pistol for dart delivery. The animal seems to be limping and at times even crawling inside the field, as the trap was still attached to its leg. Due to the thickets, the teams had difficulty locating the leopard. They found the animal sedated and hidden in one of the corners only at 16:50 hrs. However, in the heat of excitement, the locals had entered the area and surrounded the leopard trying to take a picture.

The police decide to charge lathi and even fired one shot in the air to disperse the crowd. Once the situation stabilized, the team together with volunteers from the crowd loaded the leopard into the cage and the truck for transfer. A delay occurred in moving the leopard out of the sugarcane field, as the field owner insisted to be compensated immediately for the damage to his crops.



Figure 2: The team on the JCB looking for the leopard

The forest department negotiated the terms and after a half an hour delay, the truck started moving.

The matter was reported to the Chief Wildlife Warden, Uttar Pradesh over the phone then and in writing later. Since the Leopard had injuries, It was ordered to be released into its natural habitat where the presence of Leopards was noticed only after the joint fitness certificate by the Local Government Veterinarian and Doctors from the WTI. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Western Zone, Meerut was given the task to identify the site for release.

Removing the trap and treatment of the leopard.

By 7:00 pm on the same day, the leopard was transferred to the closest range office in Parikshit Garh away from the local crowds. At this time, the leopard was partially sedated and was alert and able to move inside the cage. The leg hold trap was still attached to the animal's right forelimb. To remove the trap, the leopard had to be sedated again. At 7:45 pm, the leopard was once again darted and sedated. After ensuring complete sedation, the team started removing the leg hold trap. It took them 10 minutes to carefully remove the trap from the right forelimb paw of the leopard. The team inspected the leopard for injuries. Treatment was given accordingly. It was a **Sub-adult Female Leopard** aged between 2-3 years old. Measurements were as follows: 128 cm (Snout-Vent), 85.4 cm (tail), 46 cm (neck girth) 49 cm (Fore limb length), 61 cm (hind limb length).

Since the injuries to the right forelimb of the leopard were severe, it was advised to keep the leopard under care for seven to ten days. This was to ensure the healing of the wound and fitness of the animal before being released back to the wild. The authorities looking after the animal was given instructions on feeding and keeping the leopard covered at all times. They were told that a team will visit the leopard

again, to examine the leopard before release. The department was also advised to move the leopard to a more secure location for keeping. Hastinapur WLS was selected as the site where the leopard can be kept inside the cage, without any disturbance from local people.

After the initial treatment on the site, the Leopard on the same night was shifted to Hastinapur Range. The animal remained in the care of local forest staff from the 14th of February to the 18th of February 2014. The cage was kept inside the Bus Garage and adequate security arrangements were made to ensure that disturbance to the animal was minimum. It ate very few portions of meat kept in the Cage and drank very little water on the first day but its appetite and thirst grew day by day. For the first two days, the leopard wasn't keeping its right front foot comfortably on the floor. One the 17th February, it was seen standing on all four feet comfortably. By the end of the third day in the cage, the animal was eating 4 to 5 kilograms of chicken daily and drinking a lot of water too.



Figure 3: The leg-hold trap on the foot

Treatment

On 18th February 2014 Dr. Saurabh Singhai, Veterinarian, WTI, Uttar Pradesh Carnivore Conservation Project team visited Hastinapur. The Leopard was tranquilized and inspected by Dr. Saurabh and the Government Veterinarian. After a thorough check-up of about 20 minutes, the Vets administered long-acting antibiotics, anti-inflammatory & analgesic drugs. The Footpad was cleaned and wound dressing was done. There were no signs of dehydration. Despite the flesh injuries, no bones were broken. Although the animal was responding well to the medication, the Veterinarian thought that it was still not fully fit to be

(The writers Sri R. Hemanth Kumar, IFS., is presently working as Dy Director General Forests, Central, GoI, Chennai) and Sri Sushant Sharma IFS., is the Jt. Director, Forest Survey of India, Dehradun. Feedback: 9415786586 and Email: hravivarapu@yahoo.com)

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nonreactive compound and remains in the atmosphere for hundreds of years. While the world leaders are putting in their best in developing renewable energy (sun, wind and hydroelectric) to the scale required for all countries to achieve net zero by any time between 2050 and 2070, we must also take up greening of all barren areas to increase carbon sequestration

(The author is former Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force) Karnataka and can be reached over Mobile:9449863501 and Email: bksinghretiredpccf@gmail.com)

released into the wild. Hence, he recommended that the Leopard may be kept in captivity for about 7 – 10 days more. A microchip was implanted into the tail end of the leopard. The Leopard weighed 31.720 kgs on the 18th of February 2014. There was also a bigger cage having two parts and wooden flooring. It was modified as per the suggestions given by Dr. Saurabh and on the evening of 20th February, the leopard was shifted to a more spacious and comfortable cage. Now it was possible to clean the cage every day while the animal was shifted to the second part of the same cage.

Successful Release in Wild Habitat

On the 3rd March 2014, Dr. Abhijit Bhawal from WTI and Government Veterinarian from Hastinapur inspected the animal. As per their joint report, the animal was healthy and fully fit to be released into the Wild. The weight of the Leopard was 35.100 kgs on the 3rd March 2014 is evidenced by the fact that it had eaten well in the last 15 days or so. A Microchip was implanted at the base of the tail earlier. **The microchip number was 0006EAC5F0.**

The animal was finally released in the wild, in the Shiwalik Forest Division by a team of 5 forest officials, headed by Range Officer, Parikshit Garh at about 3:00 am on the 5th of March 2014. **The GPS coordinates of the point of release are N 30° 12.962 and E 077° 50.59. (More photos on page:31)**

potential. ISFR 2021 has reported that the country is adding carbon sequestration potential by 54 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent annually; Karnataka should be doing approximately 2 million tonnes. This potential must be doubled by 2030 and KFDC Ltd should also contribute 10% of Karnataka's share.



Water Filter

Mohammad Ahsan, IFS (Retd.)

Those were the times when water was not a very serious issue, either in availability or purity. It was potable anywhere at any place. Just a water body in the form of pond, tank or river was good enough to draw the supplies. Water was just water.

Father was an employee in the canal department, and I spent a good deal of my childhood in the canal campuses, locally known as 'naher ki kothi'. All these canal campuses had a common feature -a centrally located well. This well was the source of water to few employees and their families inhabiting the campus. Well also provided a wonderful habitat to few proverbial frogs that lived into it. The crevices in the walls of well provided home to a few lizards too to keep company to frogs. These lizards, I suppose fed over the insects that tried to lay their eggs on water surface. It was a perfect ecosystem from which we human beings drew our benefits. These wells were sometimes provided with pulley and rope to pull a bucketful of water with comparative ease. The system provided wonderful example of the functioning of lever to the students of basic science.

The wells and their surroundings served as a social club to the inhabitants of campus where they could chit chat for hours over a bucket of water. If the surroundings were pucca, these were also used for washing of cloths and bathing. Bathing was done with the help of a metal bucket and spherical vessel known as lota. The bather, while bathing, always had with some kind of transparent cloth on body below the vest; although on one occasion in one particular campus, we the bunch of few children stumbled upon a chap bathing totally nude on a well not so centrally located. Probably he was an exhibitionist who loved to exhibit his body to children. Now days we would call that activity child abuse.

However few years after, when we shifted to small town

of Barabanki, we switched over from well to single water tap in the home. With addition of hand pumps to water scenario, water could not surface as an issue for many years to come,. Forest campuses where I often stayed in course of my official duties generally had a hand-pump or a well guarded well for supply of water. Water from these handpumps or wells was never a subject of discussion. However, I did not desist in drinking water from some running nullah, if the need so arose under acute thirst while marching through the forest.

This was during this period of wandering into jungles that I hit upon water filters. These were the simple two chambered filters that needed no electricity or any other kind of paraphernalia to sustain. You just put the water into the upper chamber; the water would get filtered through a filament into the lower chamber, from where you could draw through a small tap.

I bought such a filter for my home at Shivalik House in Dehradun. The responsibility of managing the filter fell upon my khalasi Bachchan Singh. As the concept of clean water caught fire with people's imagination in mid 90s, and bottled 'mineral' water appeared on the market scenario, I told Bachchan Singh to boil and then cool the ordinary tap water before putting it into the filter. This way I was trying to take care of the dissolved impurities of water, thus I consoled myself.

In the year 2000 when I shifted from Dehradun to Lucknow, I had to put up initially in a two-room set on the first floor of Forest Rest House. As our water filter was still to be unpacked, we were using water directly from the tap. Water to tap came from a syntax water tank fixed over the roof of Rest House. One fine morning, as I had nothing better to do, I decided to take stock of the scenario over the roof. To my utter horror and amusement, I discovered the lid of this plastic tank had already been ransacked by a troop of monkeys

comprising of males, females and juveniles – all very healthy; and the water tank was being used as a small swimming pool by this herd. Going by their activities I could say the water tank had turned into a kind of water amusement park for juvenile ones where they were having time of their lives. I could guess this must have been going on for about few months. I immediately unpacked my water filter. I felt dazed thinking I have all through been using this water, rich in monkey's lice and other foreign matter.

Later when we shifted to a regular house in Forest Campus at 17, Rana Pratap Marg, Lucknow, my friends told me I was leading a life obsolete in terms of clean purified water. They told the time and age of manual filter were gone, and lot many people had shifted to aqua guard. And they got me convinced. So, keeping pace with time, I called the Aqua Guard chaps for necessary help, and got the machine fitted into our kitchen. I was very relieved I had found the final solution to water related problems. This time the responsibility of running the machine, filling up the empty water bottles every morning, putting them in refrigerator, keeping a watch over refilling them etc fell upon our help mate Rajesh with overall supervision of Rani, my wife.

A few years more passed. Then the course of events took a new turn. At a time when I was feeling the life had finally settled over water related anxieties, I felt a storm rising around my social standing. I was told by some friends, the impurities in water had come to such a high level that they were beyond the capabilities of Aqua Guard, and now everyone was going for RO, a concept known as reverse osmosis. I did not believe this and told myself water is a big business in India and there is no end to creating market. To me Aqua Guard was just fine for a simple life, and I must not invest any more money on this trash- after all we are guarded by our own system of immunity, not by water filters, more we go for these fancy things, more our immunity system gets vulnerable. But somewhere in the back of my mind were finances.

After moving over to our Gomtinagar home from Forest Campus in 2012, the things started moving at a much

faster pace. There was a telephone call or someone personally knocking on the door almost every third day. Someone would call,

'Sir, I am Sonalika from Aqua Purifiers, may I know which water filter you are using?'

I would smell a trap and reply, 'I am using Aqua Guard, and I am quite happy about it'.

She would insist, 'sir, I wish to tell you about some upgraded models of water filters.'

I knew I had to be firm now.

'Can it wait for some other time; you would appreciate this is office time.' I would reply while enjoying a novel in my bedroom. Retired persons don't have offices.

Another chap would knock on the door. 'Sir, I am Vivek from Aqua Giant, we are making a door to door survey as to the people's awareness towards impurities in water they are consuming. Can I have your two minutes?' With this he would try to take out some printed forms from his backpack.

'Just hold it for some other day Mr. Vivek, this Sunday is the only day we make our visit to people.' I would snap.

He would not feel happy yet would promise to come some other day. This game of hide and seek with the champions of water business went on for many months till one day I decided to take this game by horn. I had a usual phone call.

'Sir, I am Vinod from Eureka Forbes, may I know which water filter you are using right now?' he said congenially on my mobile phone.

'It's the simplest water filter that the company supplies. ', I replied with equal cordiality.

'Does it have UV?' He had caught me unaware. I was wondering what UV was. I felt little irritated and replied.

'I don't know much about this filter, except that it is fitted in my kitchen and my helpmate Rajesh switches on a button to draw out about ten bottles of water every morning. This water comes out from a plastic pipe attached to the machine. In absence of Rajesh, the

same drudgery is performed by my wife. It is absolute insult to a real man (Mard) to take interest in frivolous household jobs.'

'Ok sir, UV stands for ultraviolet, can you read the model of it, it is written over the machine?' he said.

I rushed to kitchen, searched for the information desired, and relayed it through my mobile.

'Sir, you are lucky, this model has UV, ultraviolet takes care of bacteria.' he said.

I felt very relieved, gave an imaginary pat on my back for choosing the right model few years back, and felt like having passed some difficult exam. Then he said.

'But, sir, the limitation of this model is UV does not kill the bacteria, it only makes it unconscious (behosh, to quote him correctly) for twenty-four hours. So if the water does not pass out from the human system within twenty four hours of it's taking out from the filter, the bacteria comes back into consciousness (hosh, to quote him once again correctly) and might attack.

I felt like struck by lightning. We kept our water bottles into fridge too often for more than 12-15 hours and consumed water at leisure. I often kept some water bottle in my car and consumed at my will. It lasted for weeks. In all probability the bacteria had come into consciousness before passing out from our system.

I felt I had badly failed the exam and went into a deep reverie.

The reverie did not last long and was broken by him. 'Sir, these kinds of filters don't take care of soluble matters in water too, if certain minerals exist in water beyond permissible limit they are fatally harmful to human body, these days water is too much loaded with all kind of pollutants.'

Then he tried to make his point clear with the help of certain data. I was not listening to him, although appreciated the general theory. He knew he had hit the nail. He took the conversation ahead, ' Sir, I think this is the time you should go for an RO. RO takes care of all aspects of water problems.' He said.

'OK, I will let you know, Vinod.' I said.

'At your service, Sir'. He tried to be genial, and our conversation came to an end.

I was aware most of the society people were having RO in their homes. Then a chance visit to Kanpur Zoological Park proved an eye opener. Mr. Thomas, the Director, told me with a sense of pride he got a huge water purifier plant, in fact a huge RO, installed in the campus for the benefit of visitors, the staff and few hundred odd animals. Then he took me to the site of giant RO. I was shocked to think; here was a person who was making his animals drink RO water, and here was me taking my water from an obsolete water filter.

So now it was the time to shift to RO, but before that I had to convince Rani, as the matter involved finances too. At an opportune moment I told her all about the health hazards we were passing through using the old water filter, the subtle life style of the bacteria, the permissible limits of soluble minerals for human consumption, and in the last the inevitability of RO for modern day living.

She was half convinced but probably wanted to keep the matter in a state of animated suspension. She suggested, 'Why don't you take opinion of some of your friends?'

I called Dr Naseem Jamal. 'Dr saheb, do you have an RO in your home?' I asked him.

'No, I don't have, in fact I never thought of it.' He replied. 'I use only an aqua guard.'

His reply stunned me. Dr Jamal is a man of means, how is it he has no RO in his home. Maybe he just got a brand-new house constructed, he has a new clean water tank over the roof free from bacteria, and maybe he is too busy to think of RO. I kept thinking so for a long time.

My next call was to Iqbal Bhai. He is a man of comparative lesser means but surprisingly he had RO in his home. I made few more calls. Some of my friends had RO, others did not. The whole issue got enveloped into confusion. RO, despite being a costly venture, had

nothing to do with somebody's annual income. World is full of mysteries.

Next day in my office, where I worked as a part-time consultant after retirement, I asked Dr. Bajrang Singh. 'Dr. Sahib, do you use RO in your home?'

Dr Bajrang Singh is a retired scientist and a very worldly-wise person.

He said, 'Yes, I do, I got it in company's exchange program a few years back, they exchange your Aqua Guard with RO by charging the price of new RO after discounting the present depreciated value of Aqua Guard.' He replied and explained at length the economics of exchange. Conversation with him gave me a new vision on the subject.

Dilemma over buying RO or not, however, came to an end with our shifting to an apartment in the central part of the town. One morning Mrs. Chaudhary, an elderly Bengali lady and next-door neighbor, after having satiated herself with the usual every morning doze of Rabindra Sangeet, ushered in our living room to pay me thanks for a small favor I had done to her day before. She has been a professor of history in few universities in her times and is intellectual type. I and she share a common dislike for all the other inmates of the building. To both of us they are uncouth, self-centered egotists. Then she told me there is no one in the building to take care of the water tank on the top floor, and the water in the tap is so dirty that life is unimaginable without an RO.

Once she left us I told Rani, 'Look, we urgently need RO to save our lives. The necessity of RO is corroborated by Mrs. Chaudhary too.'

I telephoned my old friend Vinod of Eureka Forbes. 'Vinod, can you come over and discuss the things, we wish to switch over to RO.' I told him my new address.

'Sir, I am in the village, would come after a week, I will tell Ravi to take care of you on Monday.'

'Ok', I said and thought it was Friday only.

Rani, in the meanwhile, heard this conversation. She said, 'Why are you going for Eureka Forbes, there

must be some other good companies too?'

'I don't know others, neither have time to find.' I said casually.

'Listen, Sana is coming tomorrow, she is good at these things, and she might guide you.' She said. Sana is our daughter and has a knack of knowing some tit bits of everything in the world.

Sana came on Saturday. I told her about RO and Eureka Forbes. She said,

'I think, you should go for Kent. This is better.'

'Do you use Kent in your home at Gurgaon.' I asked her back.

'No, we buy 25-liter bottled water every week, that is what most of the people do in big cities living in rented houses.' She replied tersely.

Sana is in habit of Googling on her mobile phone everything that comes her way. She googled few things on her mobile. Then she took my mobile phone and dialed local Kent office and provided me some basic information. Looking not very happy, she searched some other companies in the business and talked to them. Then she said, 'Papa, these Kent people will call you on Monday. Maybe, some others too.'

Sunday was a peaceful day for me. In the evening she flew back. On Monday my world got topsy-turvy. The first call was from Ravi of Eureka Forbes. 'Sir, when can I come over for installing RO.' he asked.

I felt embarrassed and replied. 'Ravi, we have a second thought over RO, I will let you know sooner.' I replied.

Then I had a call from Kent people, then from Aqua Purifiers, then from Aqua Giant, then from Aqua Solutions, then again from Kent, then from.....The list was endless. They were speaking from their different offices of the town, from Hazrat Ganj, from Mahanagar, from Aliganj, from as far as Vikas Nagar. Every call was nerve shattering and confused the matter more thickly. I switched off my mobile phone and had a peaceful Tuesday.

In the Wednesday morning I took a bold decision. I phoned the nearest Kent people and said. 'Look, can I have an 8 liter capacity RO installed right now at my apartment. Now means now, before lunch time, and I really mean it.' I wanted to get over this business as soon as possible and resume my nerves.

After two hours, two chaps Thakur and Kapil appeared with a RO, and after having disfigured half of my kitchen wall installed the machine. I instantly paid them the cheque after discounting the present depreciated value of the Aqua Guard which they took along. Once again I switched off my phone.

Two days after when I switched on my mobile phone, the first call that I received was from Sonica from Eureka Forbes.

'Sir, you had wished Ro to be installed at your place, when can our people see you.'

I thought it wise to nip in the bud before it blooms.

'Thank you, I got RO installed two days before, thank you very much.' I said.

'Thank you, sir.' She said rudely and hung up.

Thus ended the story of an unguarded well transformed into a guarded RO.

Epilogue:

But no. Stories never end. Too many stories keep sprouting from the main stem of the story. If you think by installing a RO, you have done up with your water problem you are living in a fool's paradise.

(The author is former PCCF & HOFF, UP: Editor, Reminiscences of SORFO (Society of Retired Forest Officers, Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand) a poet, author of many books and a photographer and author of many books. He can be contacted over phone: +91 9415409325 and Email: ahsaanluck@gmail.com)

RO is a machinery which too withers like animate and inanimate objects. One of these days it would refuse to work with an ominously raucous beep beep. You get nervous and panicky. In this state of panic, you call your old Kent chap. He listens to you and transfers your problem to a maintenance company, say Aqua Base. These chaps have a system. They would like you to enter with them into a yearly contract agreement. But they have penchant for drafting their agreement deed in such fine small letters you can't read it without the help of a convex lens. And you just sign it to get rid of the present crisis only to realize your stupidity a few months after at next ominously raucous beep beep. You call the maintenance chaps and get to know none of the accessories to be replaced are covered with your agreement deed. It is big hit at your purse. These chaps know it. Then they lure you to sign a two-yearly agreement which apparently is not only cheaper but also takes care of present shortcomings. You sign this one too. This agreement too has its own loophole, and you get hit at your pocket equally badly at next ominously raucous beep beep. The game between mouse and cat goes on and on – the cat always winning it.

In the last eight years I have spent more than four times the original price of the RO on its maintenance. Except for the outer cage, I think, every part, every knick-knack, of this RO has been replaced.

But that is still not the end of the story. I am often blamed and castigated by my conservationist friends for enjoying the 'luxury' of an RO which, for one glass of potable water, flushes three times of it in the sink.

NOTICE

The 98th GENERAL BODY MEETING of the Association of Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will be held on 18th December 2022 (Sunday) at 10.30 AM in Aranya Bhavan, Hyderabad. All the members of the Association are requested to make it convenient to attend the meeting with their spouses. - Secretary.

History:**A Dozen Reasons Which Forced Britain to Grant Us Independence After 2nd World War****Dr B. Raghottam Rao Desai, IFS (Retd.)**

“Reality is one, though wisemen speak of it variously” – Rig Veda.

Preamble:

I was studying in High School at Warangal when India achieved Independence and close to 4 or 5 years earlier to that (say, from the time ‘Quit India’ call was made, which fizzled out due to the mass arrests made overnight of hundreds & thousands of activists and all leaders in 1942), we started following the events closely through well-edited “The Hindu”.

The world was still young and fresh and life was an adventure waiting to unfold as I was just 12 and we had additionally National Ekco (marked NE) radio (run on battery) gifted by my uncle’s son (who got adopted to a rich spinster aunt from his mother’s side)--- a starkly simple box-like contraption (with an Off/On switch, a small Dial for volume & another larger one for Tuning), but holding a world inside! Legendary voices (of Melville de Mellow, Ramanuj Prasar Singh, Roshan Menon, Lotika Ratnam, Pamela Singh, Chakrapani) used to enthral, mesmerize & move us (by elevating news-reading/reporting to a solemn progression without lending to dramatization with their authoritative & nuanced reading styles, compelling India to listen with rapt attention----their voices leaving a lasting impact. Having been widely regarded as doyens of commentaries additionally (of sports, national calamities, and other events of national/global importance), their voices continued to hold millions of Indians in thrall, ever since Radio Broadcasting was commenced in the country in 1920s, when homes across would switch on their radios from 0800 hrs---not just to set their watches, but also to listen to the News Bulletins.

I am not trying to prattle on my childhood admiration for the events that took place----though there used

to occasionally pass a thought at that point of time such as ‘I was born a decade too late to understand the nuances of 2nd world war (and India’s struggle for Independence)’, but the victories of Allies (over the Axis Powers of Germany & Italy and the Fascist regime of Japan) were considered as legendary---just all this came to my mind recently amidst the hoopla surrounding the celebration of 75th Anniversary of India’s Independence (on 15th of August, 2022), preceded by a couple of involved nations’ observance of Victory in 2nd World War (on 8th of May).

Fact File:

Though it is true that success is the condiment that gives failure its flavour, yet there were many reasons which forced the British Government to grant independence to India, and I can recount at least a dozen of them which come to my mind as described hereunder:

- (1) Britain had lost faith in the loyalty of armed forces in India----particularly the Navy----having relied upon force & military superiority throughout, for maintaining its hold over India and to crush any revolt (on the part of the Indians), who joined the armed forces in thousands during the war----to not only fight for the victory of the Allied Powers but also hoping that India would get independence after the war. However, circumstances changed to such an extent during the war that their loyalty could not be depended upon as they clamoured for their country’s freedom, and were willing to give a helping hand to the nationalist movement in the country----signs of open revolts being visible in Bombay, Calcutta and Karachi, creating a feeling among the British (despite crushing the revolts) that they cannot keep India under their control with the help of the Indian forces.

- (2) All through, there was a feeling in India that the British power was invincible. However, this impression perished when the British troops suffered military reverses at the hands of the Japanese and were forced to evacuate Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaya and Burma---their best ships ("The Republic" and "Prince of Wales") having been sunk. Great Britain was not in a position 'to demonstrate in Asia the background of strength and influence (which had for so long enabled her) to rule a million people with one man on the spot'.
- (3) Racial discrimination shown (in the process of evacuation from Burma) came to the fore, When British provided separate route of White Road for Europeans and another route of Black Road for Indians, When Indian evacuees underwent too many hardships on the way, which resulted in a lot of resentment in the country when the people heard of the sufferings. In spite of managing to provide such preferential treatments to their clan, Britishers were cursed with too many problems on home front---as they had to spend so much during the war, they were completely exhausted and were forced to borrow an enormous scale, depending on other countries not only for food stuffs but also for raw materials (to run their factories) ----depending upon American help in every field.
- Under the circumstances, it was felt that it was not wise to keep herself involved in India when all of Great Britain's energy was required at home-- --even die-hards like Churchill began to feel that it was not of any advantage to keep India under bondage. The American Government also put pressure to grant India independence (as the Allied powers had been fighting for freedom and democracy).
- (5) The then British (Labour) Prime Minister Clement Attlee (who became PM in 1945) had always taken keen interest in the Indian affairs, concluded that even if India is kept in bondage with the help of force, that would not be profitable as by doing so, Britain was bound to lose the goodwill of the Indians----if goodwill was won, she was bound to gain----so he sent the Cabinet Mission to India, but when that failed, he sent Lord Mountbatten to complete the process of transfer of power in India.
- (6) And then Great Britain was involved in the cold war (after the 2nd World War) as both the US and USSR accused each other----the Russians having an advantage over the Americans, of pointing out the fact that Britain was keeping India in chains. So, Great Britain would be in a better position if she granted India independence.
- (7) Another important reason was the strength of the nationalist movement, due to which granting Independence could not be postponed for long---the 'Quit India' movement having shown that the people could go to any length to bring to an end the British Raj in the country. They made tremendous sacrifices to paralyse the administrative machinery----the colonials having become fully aware of slogans "Do or Die" and "Now or Never", the organisation of the I.N.A. (under Subhash Chandra Bose) & the cry of "Dilli Chalo" having further made them realise the folly of resisting the demand of independence.
- (8) Advocating the cause abroad of India's freedom struggle were Louis Fischer, Pearl Buck, Lin Yu tang, Norman Thomas and J J Singh among others, who put forward India's viewpoint before the conference at San Francisco which met to finalise the Charter of the U.N., to which Britain was not only a signatory but had played an important part in framing it. This fact was bound to affect the attitude of the British Government towards India and she could not talk of freedom for all while keeping India in bondage.
- (9) Yet another factor which influenced then to leave India was a change in the concept of the British common wealth which was set up in July, 1947----by which there was no reason why India

Contd.. on page No.33

We produce black - But our views are Green



Cultivation near Reclaimed Dump



Settling pond / Summer storage tank

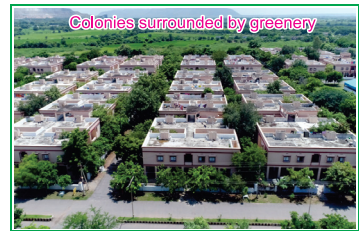


Eco-Friendly Park



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)

Convocation of the 31st Batch Forest Beat Officer Induction training on 30.09.2022 in Telangana State Forest Academy, Dulapally, Hyderabad.



Sri P.V. Raja Rao, IFS, Addl PCCF and Director, Telangana State Forest Academy, Dulapally, Hyderabad addressing the trainees.



Ms. K. Anusha (Khammam Division) topper of the training course with 4 gold medals receiving the certificate.



Members attended the General Body Meeting of the Retired Forest Gazetted Officers' Association, Warangal and Karimnagar Districts (Former Warangal Circle) held on 18.09.2022 at the Revenue Garden Karimnagar. (Page: 40)

Rescue Operation of a Foot Trapped Leopard in Meerut District (Article on page: 18)



Injury on the paw



The team weighing the animal

Alumni meet of SFRC, Coimbatore 1980-'81 Batch Raipur (Chhattisgarh) from 08/10/2022 to 11/10/2022.



Members with families - Photo taken at Chitrakootwater falls

68TH VANYAPRANI SAPTAH & 59TH ZOO DAY CELEBRATIONS Nehru Zoological Park Dt. 05. 10. 2022



Release of VanaPremi Wildlife Special issue by Sri R.M. Dobriyal, Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Telangana State.



GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH ANDHRA PRADESH STATE BIODIVERSITY BOARD GUNTUR



Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board have been playing a key role in Conservation of Biodiversity in Andhra Pradesh since its inception in 2006.

The mandate of the Board is to advise the Governments at various levels on matters related to Biodiversity Conservation. The three main functions of the A.P. State Biodiversity Board are -

1. Conservation of Biological Diversity
2. Sustainable utilization of the Biological resources
3. Fair and equitable sharing of biological resources among all stake holders.

- APSBB have recently constituted 14,157 BMCs (Biodiversity Management Committees) at all level bodies of the state (13 @ Zilla Parishad Level, 661 @ Mandal level, 120 @ Municipality or Municipal Corporation level and 13,363 @ Grama Panchayat level) and prepared PBRs in electronic method for the first time in India.
- Massive awareness & publicity activities have been taken up in the last 2 years to promote Biodiversity in the state of A.P. through short-films, publications, workshops & seminars online & offline.
- APSBB initiated Core Activities Action Plan (CAPPs) for Operationalization of 10,000 BMCs through a special software platform developed.
- 661 NGOs appointed as Mandal Biodiversity Coordinators for supporting APSBB/BMCs in implementation of CAPPs.
- Rs 11.25 crores of ABS funds released directly to LBF (Local Biodiversity Fund) accounts of BMCs through online platform.



Dr. B.M.K. Reddy, ARS (retd.)
Chairman,
APSBB, Guntur

Come & Join Hands in
Biodiversity Conservation

Dr. D. Nalini Mohan, IFS,
PCCF & Member Secretary,
APSBB, Guntur

Continuation from page No.28

could not be treated like other Dominions in that manner. Then there would be no loss to Great Britain!

- (10) The British decision to partition India and then transfer power was the culmination of the policy of “divide and rule” which ensures that she could continue to have a foot-hold on the sub-continent as a state dominated by the League would offer a permanent sphere of influence to them!
- (11) The reason for getting unanimous support (to the Indian Independence Bill in July 1947) by the members of British Parliament appears to be because of feeling that the Indians might be able to improve their economic condition as the poverty of the Indian masses was known feelingly to the British people (through the relatives of the British soldiers who had first-hand knowledge of the pathetic conditions) which the colonial rulers never bothered to tackle during their two centuries' stint.
- (12) Prime Minister Attlee held the view that the independence of India was the fulfilment of Britain's mission in India----the British were to leave India after fulfilling their mission in the country, of teaching the Indians to govern themselves and then leaving the reins of Government in their hands.

Conclusion:

Thus it can be seen that Britain had no option but to grant independence to us ---it was neither a voluntary withdrawal nor a forced extraction by a Nationalist Revolution, the decolonisation being a case of failed politics of bait & switch against the mass non-violent movement---the engagements (from 1917) after the First World War to the end of Empire (in 1947) bear out the same. Imperial Britain was obliged to recognize independence and was compelled to leave India when it was driven into a corner as afore-stated. When the situation was at boiling point, the Labour Party won the elections in the UK (in July, 1945) and its leader Clement Attlee became the PM (replacing Winston Churchill)----boosting hopes for complete independence to be a reality since decolonisation was the cornerstone of Attlee's foreign-policy----the British imperial-power (which was earlier reluctant to grant even 'dominion status'), agreed in the changed circumstances, for dominion-status (with a liberty to Indians to declare complete independence by framing their own Constitution), leading to pass Indian Independence Act of 1947, by the British Parliament (immediately after the announcement of June 3, 1947); Section 7 (1) (a) saying that the British shall “have no responsibility” towards British India; Section 7(1) (b) declaring the British sovereignty (paramountcy) over princely states “lapsing” and Section 8 granting the power to frame a Constitution (to the Constituent Assembly).

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

DO YOU HAVE AN ANECDOTE – SHARE !!

Despite a hectic lifestyle or a tiring career, we always enjoy the fun-filled moments, inadvertent practical jokes that creep. Though you are not a regular writer, we are sure you wish to share these joyous incidents with your close associates. We are here to enjoy it too. Natural-born writers cannot help themselves to pen it immediately; if they are not writing, they are thinking about writing. You too can do it for everyone here! Please share these minor incidents with Vana Premi readers.

EDITOR, VanaPremi.
(thayyab@gmail.com)



Green Quiz - November 2022

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

1. What is the name given to an organism that is half Fungus and Half caterpillar?
2. Which Wildlife Sanctuary in India is going to have the country's first Dark Sky Reserve?
3. What parameter is used by the International Dark Sky Association to certify a place as Dark Sky Reserve?
4. A Black tailed Godwit recently flew from Mumbai to South-West Siberia (5000 kms) in 47 days. It is named after a famous Indian expert on Migration of Birds. Name Him?
5. Which organisation supports listing and monitoring of Birds in India?
6. If Highways are for automobiles, what are for Birds?
7. First time in India, Bird watchers gathered to count birds in migration in Western India. Which place ?
8. What category of Birds are these which are on marathon flights across Continents, stop for a while in India and then cross Indian Ocean to reach Africa?
9. Where in India is the Owl festival observed since 2018 to drive away superstition and to promote Biodiversity?
10. Earlier known as Tourism festival, this is being observed as Sangai festival since 2010. In which state of India?
11. Which is the first Urban Residence in India to be awarded ISO 14001 for eco-conservation?
12. Which system that lies 1.5 to 2.0 M below Sea level is an Globally Important Agri-Eco system in India?
13. Why does the Tuna have to be swimming from birth to death non-stop?
14. Who gifted the Iron Building (In Public Gardens, Hyderabad) to the Nizam of Hyderabad?
15. A temple of Padmanabhaswamy near Kasargod, Karnataka has a Vegetarian Crocodile that recently died at 70 years age. What name is given to it?

(Answers on page: 45)

(Quiz Master is the defending Quiz Champion of All-India Forest Sports Meet 2019, Raipur. Retired as PCCF, he now works part-time as Chief Consultant (Trg.) at Dr. MCR HRD Institute of Telangana, Hyderabad.)

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

“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.”

- Helen Keller

I Long For You, Rain

S.K. Das, IFS (Retd.)



*All of us today
Deeply desire the advent of Monsoon.
Oh, rain drops!
All are in anxious wait for you.*

*This scorching summer
Leads the tired soul towards you
We abandon all other wishes
Except the boon of your arrival.*

*The leaves of my white jasmine tree
Are smeared with dust
Some dry remnants of the flower still hang from
the branches.
They are waiting to be drenched in your
downpour
And fall glory.*

*Bits of pieces of white cloud
Sail through the morning sky*

*The sweet melody of the cuckoo
Hiding behind red flower and green leaves
Of the Gulmohar tree
Bid adieu to me as the sun raises.*

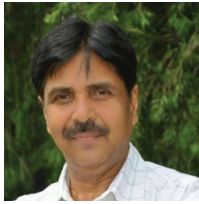
*The long tiring day advances
And gives way to night.
To a starry sky
I spend sleepless nights,
With the thick anticipation of dark monsoon.*

*I therefore long for you today-
A dark cloudy sky
The scent of flowers known and unknown
The scent ascending from a rain-soaked earth.
I desire you in the deep crevices of my heart.
I pine for your presence in the world outside
You would dance in my musicless soul
I would feel you in the rain filled wind
You would me my classical tune of rain.*

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

*“Love is that condition in which the happiness of
another person is essential to your own.”*

- Robert A. Heinlein



Kuno National Park Is Not Yet Ready For Cheetahs Introduction (Part-II)

Dr Uma Shanker Singh, IFS(R), D.Sc.

(Continued from the previous issue)

Cheetah Speed May Be Its Weakness And Not Strength In Knp Woodlands

Cheetahs reach speeds of up to 113 km/h accelerating from zero to 96 km/h in 3 seconds and its main prey base is considered to be chital in KNP. There are many studies which suggests that cheetahs adjusts his speed in accordance with the speed of prey base and perusal of literature reveals that the chital runs at the maximum speed of 65 km/h but a chase in woodlands may not go in favour of carnivore like cheetah in KNP. There is a general perception that most of the grasslands, especially in central India, are 'cultural', which means official intervention was required to relocate people from these areas, following which they became grasslands with heavy inputs in KNP but a close examination at it will reveal that the, the farmlands, over time, have been taken over by plants that are woodland species such as *Ziziphus nummularia* or Jhar Beri, *Acacia leucophloea* or Reonj and *Dichrostachys cinerea* or Birbira. These farms are now woodlands and this kind of habitat is not suitable for cheetahs from Africa, who stay in the Savannahs. Once cheetah dominated in numbers there are many factors which have contributed to the species decline.

Today's wild cheetah population is estimated at 7100 adult and adolescents, a 90% reduction from a century ago, and a range reduction of 9%. Over 80% live outside protected areas where human-wildlife conflict occurs (Laurie Marker 2019). Cheetahs require a large home range of an average of 1500 km² with large prey base and Madhya Pradesh forest is facing its biggest habitat fragmentation ever. A recent study by a group of researchers from India, U.S. and Germany, examines the findings from five independent studies on tiger connectivity in central India to gain insights into

the integrity of the wildlife corridors for the long-term survival of tigers. The study finds that the places in central India that are critical for landscape connectivity for the movement of tigers show a large overlap with human-use areas. Therefore, the same fate will be meted out to project Cheetah as was seen in case of tigers as it is evident that despite a hype in the project tiger the forest departments across the states in general and MP in particular could not stop fragmentation in the wildlife habitat (Jay M. Schoen 2022)

Preferred Prey Base For Cheetah Is Not Adequate In KNP

There are plenty of studies on the preferred prey base of the African cheetahs and this raises red flag when they are proposed to be translocated to KNP because the prey available here, chital (*Axis axis*), may not be called as preferred prey base for them. The multiple reports state that Indian cheetahs were largely dependent on blackbucks (*Antelope cervicapra*) and chinkaras (*Gazella bennettii*), sometimes on chital and rarely on nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*). Blackbucks used to inhabit KNP once upon a time but they disappeared over the years on account of changes in the vegetation, the open areas were invaded by tall grasses like *Themeda triandra* which gave way to shrub land and finally, woodland and this led to complete disappearance of blackbuck from the area. Chinkara was also found in good numbers in KNP and the earlier data suggests that in 2004 they were 4-5/ km² which rose to 6-10/km² in 2007 but their numbers started to decline since then and the last report published in 2016 suggested that population of Chinkaras declined to 0.9/km².

This simply translates to a clear message that the prey base is very weak. And it is not that people have killed these animals, they have gone out due to ecological succession. Another prey species, the chital, is also

decreasing in group size. The intra guild competition is certainly going to be fierce between leopards and cheetahs because several studies have revealed that male leopard activity levels peaked during evening twilight or during moonlight and cheetahs also showed extensive temporal overlap with them. They also show positive associations with moonlight availability therefore, there are possibility that more aggressive predators such as tigers and leopards will compete with the cheetahs and they may be driven to the outskirts of the park, where they could come into conflict with humans and get killed (K. Rafiq etal, 2020).

Discussion and Conclusion:

The introduction of cheetahs in in KNP dates back to 2009. The proposal was first floated in 2009 and when the Supreme Court examined the entire translocation process way back in 2013, it found massive flaws with the proposed introduction of African cheetahs to KNP. The court observed, "The decision to introduce African Cheetahs into the same proposed habitat chosen for re-introduction of Asiatic lion has not been either placed before the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life, nor has there been a consistent decision. MoEF&CC (Ministry of Environment and Forest), in our view, has not conducted any detailed study before passing the order of introducing foreign cheetah to KNP.

KNP is not a historical habitat for African cheetahs, no materials have been placed before us to establish that fact. We may indicate that our top priority is to protect Asiatic lions, an endangered species and to provide them a second home. Crores of rupees have been spent by the Government of India and the State of Madhya Pradesh for reintroduction of Asiatic lion to KNP. At this stage, in our view, the decision taken by MoEF&CC for introduction of African cheetahs first to KNP and then Asiatic lion, is arbitrary and illegal and a clear violation of the statutory requirements provided under the Wild Life Protection Act. The order of MoEF&CC to introduce African Cheetahs into KNP cannot stand in the eye of Law and the same is quashed." The irony of the fact is that the neither the lions have been brought nor the

plan for introduction of the cheetahs have been ceased.

The other fact also surprises the scientific world that an expert committee formed by the Supreme Court in 2013 on lion translocation to KNP has not met once since 2016 till to this date despite of the fact that in the expert committee's meeting before 2016 members strongly stated that KNP was ready to receive the lions. But neither the Centre nor the government of Gujarat have taken any tangible action to translocate the lions. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), a statutory body of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), in its affidavits in the Supreme Court categorically stated that the cheetah introduction will not impact the re-introduction of lions in any adverse manner. The Supreme Court in yet it's another order of 2020 stated : "It is submitted that African Cheetahs would be introduced on an experimental basis in a careful chosen habitat and nurtured and watched to see whether it can adapt to the Indian conditions. In case there are some difficulties noticed about the location in which it is introduced, we are informed that the location would be changed to another forest which is more habitable for the animals." The SC again appointed another expert committee to guide the NTCA to conduct field surveys to choose the best location for African cheetahs in India. The expert committee was to submit its report every four months to the SC in order to apprise the court but till to this date there is nothing in the public domain which suggests that the expert committee has submitted any report in the Supreme Court while stating its updates in 2020. A technical note was published in January 2021 by wildlife institute of India (WII) putting up the details of the site visits in 2020 while assessing the potential sites for the introduction of cheetahs in two states namely, Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve, Shergarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary, KNP, Madhav National Park, and Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary.

This is surprising to see how hurried the expert team was that in a period of 12 days, the field assessments of six sites were finalized, with some locations seen and assessed in less than a day. KNP, the best studied

site, took four days and this seems that the expert team had already made up their mind on KNP. We say with full responsibility at our command as foresters that this is not the way assessments are done in the forest area in order to be able to decide relocation of a species which is genetically and ecologically distinctly different. The action plan states, "Once a cheetah population is established in KNP, reintroduction of the lion or colonization by tigers would not be detrimental for cheetah persistence." Therefore, the action plan accepts that the introduction of lions and tigers may be destabilising factors for the cheetah introduction and its stability and survival in the ecosystem but in my view, leopards are far more critical and may pose a far more serious problem for cheetah. KNP is on way to end up as glorified fenced safari parks rather than wildlife landscapes with self-sustaining populations.

History Of Introduction Of Cheetah In India

The history of Introduction goes as far back as 1955 when the then government of Andhra Pradesh suggested the introduction of cheetah in two districts on an experimental basis and this evoked enough interest in public. Many years later the then Prime minister and an avid wildlife lover Mrs. Indira Gandhi took up the issue and in 1984, Divya Bhanu Singh was asked to write a paper on status of cheetah in India for the MOEF. According to some of the reports the issue of cheetah introduction was formally rekindled by Zafar Futehally, Honorary Secretary of WWF in early 1980s, who decided to request Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on this issue and requesting her to reinstate the process of bringing some cheetahs in India.

Some reports find that a huge area of Rann of Kutch was considered as suitable for the release of cheetahs. The Department of Environment, formally wrote to the Iranian government to ask for the cheetahs and apparently received a positive response. The Government of India requested Iran to send some cheetahs but there are also some reports which reveals that in addition to this, offers by the Kenyan government to send cheetahs to India were also made. This idea was also opposed vehemently by the then eminent biologists of the country like T.N. Khoshoo, who

reportedly writes after meeting the then Prime minister Mrs Indira Gandhi that, "The reintroduction project was discussed threadbare during Indira Gandhi's tenure and found to be an exercise in futility." This heated debate that took place through the late 1970s up to the end of her Prime Ministership in 1984, pointedly showing his opposition to the idea (Ghazala Shahabuddin, 2015).

August 2009, the then forest minister once again moved forward with the idea of talking with Iran for sharing of their animals. Iran had always been hesitant to commit to the idea, given the rarity of the species there. The idea was again taken forward in the month of July 2010, when Wildlife Institute of India and Wildlife Trust of India jointly completed the report on feasibility of cheetah reintroduction in India which was made public. Three sites were finally identified for the cheetah introduction of which Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh, given the large area of habitat available and the already incurred investments in village displacement. It was suggested that initially 27 cheetahs would be moved to the core area of 347 sq.km from where they were expected to spread out to a larger forested landscape of 3200 sq.km surrounding and including Kuno WLS. Eventually the report envisaged cheetahs populating an area of 6500 sq.km in the region.

This Plan Will Fail

There is a calculation which says that to establish a viable population in the wild we would certainly need a huge area. There is an estimate which explains that in order to have 100 cheetahs in the wild the forest department should allocate around 10,000 sq.km area, essentially free of dogs, goats, sheep etc. and there is no such area in India. Losses of introduced animals which are genetically weak and coming from different habitat will be very high and unsustainable. All this is far too expensive and impractical. The action plan made is unreasonable and lack substance. The action plan says that 3200 sq.km will be enough to house 100 cheetahs but the studies suggest us that 12, 700 sq.km, would be needed for 100 cheetah if not less. The habitat is crucially important in order to be able to form a healthy prey base. A close examination of the action plan reveals that densities of different prey animals are not

very scientifically based as number of sightings, their densities at different locations are not shown.

There are other questions which need to be clearly spelt out in the action plan. This is evidently clear that in the face of rapid climate change the habitat suitability issues also become question of current understanding of Indian grasslands. Grasslands are complex and dynamic ecosystems and the factors that affect and shape plant species and composition are as yet largely unknown in India, as in many parts of the world. While some grasslands are largely fire-maintained, others may be controlled by soil fertility or floods. Tied into this are questions of past anthropogenic influences such as grazing and fire that may have played a role in maintaining plant species composition and diversity in the past, and that now have been modified. In addition, there are issues of over-grazing, grassland degradation, soil compaction and invasion by exotics in areas vacated by people. Such factors further lead to degradation and unsuitability of the habitat for ungulates. Clearly in-depth studies are required to ascertain the need and processes for management restoration of the available habitats if the cheetah was to survive here.

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

General Body Meeting of The Retired Forest Gazetted Officers' Association, Warngal and Karimnagar Districts, Date 18.09.2022.

The General body meeting of the Retired Forest Gazetted Officers Association of former Warangal Circle was held on 18.09.2022 at the Revenue Garden, Karimnagar. At the beginning of the meeting the members attended have observed two minutes silence to pay respects to the departed souls of Sri Poosa Ramesh and Karnati Manikyam.

All the Office bearers including Executive members are felicitated. As the post of the President fell vacant due the sudden demise of Sri P. Ramesh, Sri G. Satyanarayana is elected in the meeting as President of the Association for the rest of the tenure. Sri Buchi Reddy from Karimnagar is nominated as the Advisor in place of Sri G. Satyanarayana. Sri K. Mahender Raju has submitted his report to the General body. In his report he mentioned that the association is taking care of problems faced by the members on pensions, medical reimbursement bills and other service-related problems. He expressed his anguish on the depletion of natural forests, RoFR issues, assault cases on forest personnel and allocation of a room for the association in respective forest complexes.

Sri A. Vijayakumar has expressed that the association should meet the senior members who are unable to attend the meetings due to their age-related problems, at their homes and the young, retired officers should help them in submission of medical bills, if any and to know about their health and to boost up their morale. Sri K. Purushotham greeted all the members on world bamboo day. He expressed his condolences on the death of Sri P. Ramesh his close friend and his batch mate. He further expressed that the association should organize some tour programs with families to nearby

sightseeing places for recreation purpose. He came forward to organize a tour to Bogatha waterfalls or to Pakhal in the month of October. Sri M. A. Wahab in his message desired that the meeting of the members should be once in three months instead of present six months.

Sri V. Devachary requested all the members to subscribe to VANAPREMI, the monthly magazine run by the State Retired Forest Officers Association. He also suggested that the District Forest Officers of Hanumakonda and Karimnagar would be requested to invite the association to participate in important Departmental programs. The newly elected President G. Satyanarayana has thanked all the members for electing him as President for the second time and promised to meet all the needs of the members and functioning of the association smoothly.

The Members of Karimnagar have come forward to bring up diary for the year 2023. Accordingly, a diary committee is formed with the following members to bring up the diary 2023. Sri Sammi Reddy and Sri Ashok from Warangal and Sri Rajender and Sri Narender from Karimnagar.

The following resolutions are passed in the General body meeting.

1. The annual subscription has to be raised to Rs. 1000/- from present Rs 500/-
2. The exgratia of Rs 5000/- has to be increased to Rs 10,000/- to be paid to the family members in case of death of any member of association. This has to be adapted from the date of last General

Contd.. on page No.52

Whether wildlife in india is in peril?

Dr Akula Kishan, IFS,(Retd.)



Wildlife:

Wildlife refers to undomesticated animal species but has come to include all organisms that grow or live wild in an area without being introduced by humans. Wildlife can be found in all ecosystems. Deserts, plains, grasslands, woodlands, forests, and other areas, including the most developed urban areas, all have distinct forms of wildlife.

According to Section 2(37) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the "wildlife" is defined as to include any animal, aquatic or land vegetation which forms part of any habitat. Section 2(14) defines 'habitat' to include land, water, or vegetation which is the natural home any wild animal. And according to Section 2(36) the 'wild animal' means any animal specified in Schedules I to IV and found wild in Nature.

So wildlife as per the Act means the species mentioned in the Schedules of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 only!!

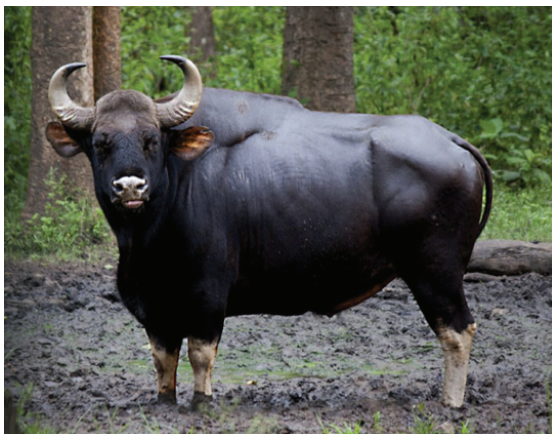


Efforts by Government :

The major step taken by Government is to identify and protect the Wildlife in different protected areas such as:

- (a) Sanctuaries- There are 565 existing wildlife sanctuaries in India covering an area of 1,22,560.85 sq.km which is 3.73% of geographical area of the Country. Another 218 Sanctuaries are proposed covering an area of 16,829 sq.km.
- (b) National Parks – There are 106 existing National Parks in India covering an area of 44,372.42 sq.km. which is 1.35% of the geographical area of the Country. Another 75 National Parks are being proposed.
- (c) Conservation Reserves- There are 100 existing Conservation Reserves in India covering an area of 4927.28 sq.km which is 0.15% of the geographical area of the Country.
- (d) Community Reserves- There are 219 existing Community Reserves in India covering an area of 1446.28 sq.km which is 0.04% of the geographical area of the Country.
- (e) Project Tiger- The Project Tiger was launched by the Government of India in the year 1973 to save the endangered species of Tiger in the Country. There were (9) Tiger reserves in 1973 and grown to (51) in 2016.
- (f) Biosphere Reserve- The programme of Biosphere Reserve was initiated by UNESCO in 1971. The purpose of the formation of biosphere reserve is to conserve in situ all forms of life, along with its support system, in its totality, so that it could serve as a referral system for monitoring and evaluating changes in the natural ecosystems. Presently there are 18 notified biosphere reserves in India.

- (g) Elephant Reserves- Project Elephant was launched by Government of India in the year 1992 and there are 16 elephant reserves in the Country to protect the habitat of elephants and their corridors, and also attend to man-animal conflict. It also aims at protecting captive elephants.
- (h) Ramsar Wetland sites- The Ramsar Convention is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable utilization of wetlands, recognizing the fundamental ecological functions of wetlands and their economic, cultural, scientific and recreational value. There are 42 Ramsar sites identified in India.
- (i) Natural World Heritage sites- The UNESCO identified Natural, Cultural and Mixed World Heritage sites, and there are 7 Natural World Heritage sites in India such as Great Himachal National Park, Western Ghats, Sunderbans National Park etc. There are 30 Cultural World Heritage sites in India such as Historic City of Ahmedabad, Rani-ki-Vav(the Queen's Step well) at Patan, Red Fort Complex, Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram etc. And Khangchendzonga National Park, Sikkim is the mixed World Heritage site.



Efforts by Others:

There are number of Non-Governmental Organisations who take care of matter related to the animals and plants. They arrange wildlife protection drives,

awareness drives, and tree plantation drive to make people understand the need for conserving wildlife. Some of the NGOs are aided by government, and others are helped by crowd funding.

- (a) Worldwide Fund for Nature-India- WWF India is a science-based organization which addresses issues such as the conservation of species and its habitats, climate change, water and environmental education, among many others. It encourages environmental conservation by working with different stakeholders- Governments, NGOs, schools and colleges, corporates, students and other individuals.
- (b) The Centre for Environment Law (CEL) – WWF India was formally launched in 1993 and it launched number of Court cases for protection of Wildlife. The Bhitarkanika case to protect the Olive Ridleys against an ecologically flawed jetty construction in Kendrapara, Orissa; the Narayan Sarovar Case against the Sanghi Cements Giant to save the Chinkara in the Narayan Sarovar Sanctuary in Gujarat and then an intervention in the Delhi ridge case. The TRAFFIC India was equally active on fighting legal battles on specific illegal wildlife trade issues.

The Civil Writ Petition No. 337 of 1995 was filed by CEL –WWF India in May, 1995 in the Supreme Court of India for the protection and development of the National Parks and Sanctuaries in India.

The main prayer was for directions to the concerned authorities (Central Government, State Governments and the District Collectors) to:

- (i) discharge their statutory functions provided under Sections 19- 25 of the Wildlife (P) Act, 1972, and
- (ii) enquire into and determine the existence, nature and extent of the rights of any persons in or over the land comprised with the limits of the National Parks and Sanctuaries. - The case is pending in Apex Court.



- (c) Wildlife First is another organisation which believes in the ideology of strictly protecting wildlife reserves. Wildlife First pursues a strategy that has the potential to deflect commercial and developmental pressures away from wildlife reserves and equitably address the livelihood needs of people marooned inside through site-specific, incentive driven voluntary resettlement solutions.

They filed Interlocutory Application in the Supreme Court in Godavarman case leading to the prohibition of tree felling and other commercial exploitation across all Sanctuaries & National Parks in India. This has effectively blocked State Governments/Forest Departments across the country from pursuing tree felling and also greatly contributed to rejection of several developmental project proposals involving commercial exploitation in National Parks and Sanctuaries.

- (d) Wildlife Conservation Trus. works on ground with the local forest department for conservation, science and training manpower. They also do health care as well as livelihood awareness programs in rural areas around forests
- (e) Wildlife SOS works towards protecting wildlife, conserving habitat, studying biodiversity, conducting research and creating alternative and sustainable livelihoods for erstwhile poacher communities or those communities that depend on wildlife for sustenance. They run a few rescue centres and have done some amazing work on rehabilitation of Bears & Dancing Bear Owners

- (f) Some of the more renowned NGOs in India include Rhino Foundation for Nature in Assam, Wildlife Society of Orissa, Friends of Forests in Maharashtra, Nature's Beckon in Assam, North Eastern Society for Preservation of Nature and Wildlife in West Bengal, Nature Conservation Society of Amravati in Maharashtra, Bali Nature and Wild Life Conservation Society in West Bengal and The Friends of the Doon in Uttaranchal.

Wildlife Habitat:

Wildlife Habitat within forest areas and outside forest area is under constant biotic pressure. The Forests are depleting at alarming rate due to encroachment, diversion of forest land for development programmes, land diversion due to RoFR Act etc. The Government forests are thus not supporting the wildlife to the needed extent, and the Wild Animals are forced to go over to outside forest areas leading to man-animal conflict, and ultimately the Wildlife has to pay the price by sacrificing themselves to hunters or other forces.



National Board for Wildlife:

The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) is the apex body in India for all wildlife-related matters. It is primarily responsible for the promotion of wildlife conservation and the development of wildlife and forests.

It is a statutory body constituted under Section 5A of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (WLPA). It approves projects (including government projects) in and around the protected areas. It is an advisory board and advises the Government of India on policy matters concerned with wildlife conservation in the country. The Board is chaired by the Prime Minister of India.

The Board is not meeting at regular intervals as required and the last meeting as seen from the website of Forestry Ministry the 59th meeting of the Board was held on 05.10.2020.



Wildlife Institute of India:

Wildlife Institute of India is established as an attached office in May, 1982 and became Autonomous Institute since 1986. The mission of the Institute to nurture the development of Wildlife Science and promote its application in conservation, in consonance with cultural and socio-economic milieu. The mandate of the Institute is to build capacity through training, education and research in the field of wildlife conservation.

The Institute is having many departments, but still has to develop as resource center on Wildlife, so that any one in need of information may look towards the Institute.

The Institute may develop a legal data base and guide the field officers in wildlife crime investigation and legal procedures.

The Institute has to diversify and be more accessible, and the Institute may set up branches in different locations so that the needy officers and public can have immediate reach.



Forest Administration and Wildlife:

Hitherto, the Forest Officers are managing the Wildlife areas also, and there is a suggestion made by the National Commission of Agriculture in the year 1976 that the State Governments to set up separate Wildlife wing in Forest Department under the single Head of Forest Department. Management of fauna cannot be differentiated from that of flora under Indian conditions. Protection of the habitat is as much a problem in the Country as scientific development and use of wildlife and hence a separation of authority would so dilute the responsibility as to be a great hindrance to wildlife development. Hence it is desirable that the forest management and wildlife management should be under single officer, and territorial charge and wildlife should be under one roof for effective management.

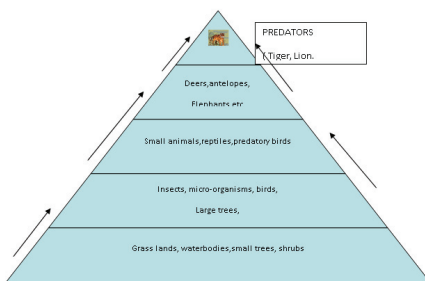


The impediments:

1. Though about 5% of geographical area is reserved as protected area, the area is not sacrosanct, and it is disturbed humans and cattle, and the wildlife has to co-exist and survive.
2. The translocation of villagers and habitations is not happening as desired, and the human-animal conflict continues.
3. There are no sufficient water and food resources in the wildlife habitats and it requires the wildlife to go outside their normal territory seeking the food and water, and become endangered.
4. The funding for the wildlife conservation is not commensurate to the efforts being made.
5. The 'National Tiger Conservation Authority' is established as per provisions of Chapter IVB of

Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 for approval of Tiger Conservation Plan and related issues. It should also consider to develop the habitat in general by improving forest cover thereby increasing the prey base to predators including Tiger.

6. Tiger and other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau is set up as per provisions of Chapter IVC of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to collect and collate intelligence related to organized wildlife crime activities and disseminate the same to States and other enforcement agencies. The Headquarters of the Bureau is at New Delhi. The Bureau has its regional offices at Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and Jabalpur. It also has 3 sub-regional offices at Guwahati, Cochin and Amritsar and 5 Border Units at Gorakhpur, Motihari, Nathula, Moreh and Ramanathapuram. The role of the Bureau is to be enhanced and the activities may be extended to general wildlife crimes also, as the field staff is not well versed in crime investigation and legal procedures.
7. The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and Rules made there under are to be amended suitably. Many outdated Rules are to be modified or annulled.



(The author is Retired Conservator of Forests, Telangana State, authored many books on Forest and allied Acts, Forest Code 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.)

Conclusion:

The Biological Pyramid has to be kept in view for conserving forests and wildlife, as shortage of a level in the pyramid or deficiency of the availability of prey would cause dislocation and consequent problems.

Global wildlife populations have decreased by 68% since 1970 as a result of human activity, particularly over-consumption, population growth, and intensive farming, according to a 2020 World Wildlife Fund's Living Planet Report and the Zoological Society of London's Living Planet Index measure, which is further evidence that humans have unleashed a sixth mass extinction event. According to CITES, it has been estimated that annually the international wildlife trade amounts to billions of dollars and it affects hundreds of millions of animal and plant specimen.

The wildlife needs to be taken care by providing proper habitat and resource management.

The Government Institutions as well as Non-Governmental Organisations have to devise methods for awareness building and pool up resources to reduce human-animal conflict. The survival of wildlife is linked to forest development, consequent development of forest eco-system for sustenance of human beings.

ANSWERS: 1. Caterpillar Fungus, 2. Chongthang WLS, Ladakh, 3. Light pollution at night, 4. Bala-Balachandran, 5. Bird Count India, 6. Fly Ways, 7. Bhuj, Gujrat, 8. Passage Birds, 9. Pingori (v), Pune District, 10. Manipur, 11. Rashtrapathi Bhawan, New Delhi, 12. Kuttanad, 13. Absence of Floating Bladders, 14. Queen Victoria, 15. Babia



Solution for Protection of Greenery

- Dasari Nagabhushanam, IFS (Retd.)

*While walking every day I choose a big circle
Looking at the old but not despaired hopes
I analyze in worn-out clothes
the colors of budding desires
Listen to the smooth language of
soil particles with bare foot
The serene soft ground bathed with raindrops
Silently I compose the soil music with tolerance
I myself often dig into sweet memories of infancy
While walking in cool shade of green trees
I taste the warmth sweat saltiness of the laborers
I breathe deeply the green ambitions of hands
I hear the birds chirping in the branches
I see the lovely greetings
and swimming kisses of butterflies
in the colourful stream of flowers*

*While walking in the forest
I listen the pain of fallen fruits
The crushed livelihood of tribes
in the vanishing greenery
The heart-rending songs hidden
in the graves of dead tree stumps
I watch the decline of wildlife
so I often change my walking path
for new adventurous experience*

*In the unforgotten habit of walking
I had a dream to break the encircled problems
Sowing seeds with my walking stick
from the shoulder bag filled with sufficient seeds
The purpose of my unending walk
to find a solution for the protection of
young seedlings germinating tomorrow.*

(The writer is a former CF, Telangana, and the Associate Editor of VanaPremi. He is a versatile artist and poet with many art works and books to his credit. He can be contacted over mobile +918096511200 and email: dasari.nagabhushanam@gmail.com)

Wildlife Forensics – A Perspective

V.V. Hariprasad, M.S(IS), M.A, M.Phil, LLM, PGDCJ&FS



“Wildlife forensic is a field of criminal investigation wherein science is used to identify and examine evidence from crime scenes where animals have been killed, particularly those that are protected by law. Wildlife forensics plays a crucial role in curtailing the wildlife trade and human-wildlife conflict”.

If you've watched any crime series in your life, then you are probably familiar with how investigations are conducted and what protocols are followed at a crime scene. Now, picture the same process, but with one big difference... the victim isn't a human, but an animal. In a nutshell, this is wildlife forensics. In this regard, poaching is one of the most commonly investigated crimes by wildlife forensic personnel.

Wildlife Forensics:

Wildlife forensics is a relatively new field of criminal investigation. Its goals are to use scientific procedures to examine, identify, and compare evidence from crime scenes, and to link this evidence with a suspect and a victim, which is specifically an animal. Killing wild animals that are protected from hunting by laws, also called poaching, is one of the most serious crimes investigated by wildlife forensic scientists. Other crimes against wildlife include buying and selling protected animals and buying and selling products made from protected animals.

The international organization that monitors trade in wild animals and plants is the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which was established in 1963 and, as of 2022, includes 184 member countries. **CITES is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the**

survival of the species. In the United States, the Endangered Species Act, which was authorized in 1973, protects endangered and threatened species and the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife has the authority to prosecute violations against protected species. Trent University in Ontario, Canada houses one of the largest wildlife DNA forensics departments in North America, incorporating an extremely active research facility.

The types of evidence analyzed by a wildlife forensics lab include any part of an animal including blood and tissue samples, carcasses, hair, teeth, bones, claws, talons, tusks, hides, fur, feathers, or stomach contents. Wildlife forensic scientists may also investigate materials used to kill or harm animals, such as poisons, pesticides, projectiles, and weapons. Products that are made from animals are also of interest, including leather goods and medicines, especially those from Asia.

One of the most critical problems facing wildlife forensic scientists is identifying a particular species from crime scene evidence. For example, wildlife forensic scientists may have to distinguish if a piece of leather on a watchband is made from a protected animal, like an elephant or a zebra, or if it comes from a non-protected animal, like a cow or a horse. They must be able to determine if a medicinal powder contains the pulverized remains of a protected animal, like a rhinoceros, a tiger, or coral. They must be able to differentiate between the roe of protected fish from farm-raised caviar.

A variety of scientific techniques allow wildlife forensic scientists to answer these types of questions. Techniques similar to those used in a police crime lab are used to identify and analyze parts of animals as well as bullets, shot casings, paint chips, soil, and fibers found at the crime scene. Experts in fingerprinting, ballistics, soil analysis, and hair comparisons examine evidence



visually and with microscopic techniques for fashion. As a result, many wildlife species are on the brink of extinction.

Pathologists examine carcasses for wounds in order to determine how the animal died and to distinguish natural death from human killing. Experts in the morphology, or the form, of animals can identify the species, and sometimes subspecies, of animals found at crime scenes. They can often determine the age and sex of animals as well as the time-since-death by careful observations of feathers, skulls, and skeletons. Chemists may be asked to identify poisons and pesticides, characterize the contents of Asian medicines, and provide species identification, when possible. Molecular biologists use protein and DNA analyses to provide information about the identity of a sample. Genetics can be particularly useful when the sample is very small or unidentifiable from its morphology.

Some answers that genetic tests may provide include identification of species, characterization of the familial relationships between animals, and evaluation of two different samples in order to determine if they originated from the same individual. In addition, geneticists may be able to provide environmental information about an animal.

Examples of criminal cases in which wildlife forensics have been used are extensive, but a few examples illustrate the importance of this field.

A large proportion of the cases in the United States involve trafficking in fake caviar or caviar that is illegal to import. One man, who owned a caviar company in New York, sold the eggs of the American paddlefish, a protected species that lives in the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers, as caviar. DNA testing by wildlife forensic scientists verified that the roe was not Russian *Sevruga*, as labeled, but from the paddle fish. He was sentenced to two years in jail and fined \$100,000. His company was additionally fined \$110,000. In Wyoming, six carcasses of pronghorn antelope were discovered in a pit. The heads were removed, but no meat was taken. After a suspect was apprehended, wildlife forensic scientists were able to match DNA from the skulls of antelope in his custody to the DNA in the carcasses. The man was fined, served time in jail and his hunting license was suspended. In 1991, the sale of wild red drum (a fish) was banned in the state of Texas, however farm-raised red drum may still be sold legally. Using chemical assays to distinguish between the types of fats found in wild and farm-raised red drum, forensic scientists were able to identify the origin of red drum in the marketplace. Eventually, poaching rings were infiltrated and violators prosecuted in court. In 1998, an Iowa hunter returned

from a safari to Africa with the skull of a brown hyena that he had shot. The brown hyena is an endangered species and after the man bragged about his kill, local wildlife agents seized the skull. Wildlife experts used morphology, comparing the skull to a series of hyena skulls, to identify the skull as illegal. The hunter was fined, and his hunting license was revoked worldwide.

Why is there a need for wildlife forensics?

Organized wildlife crime is a huge problem worldwide and one that threatens the survival of many species. From poisoning and electrocuting to shooting and snaring animals, poachers go to extreme lengths to feed the international wildlife trade market.

Whether it is the skin of the tiger, the hair of the mongoose or the ivory tusks of elephants, everything under the sun is sought after for some reason—medicine, or otherwise.

How is wildlife forensics conducted?

Wildlife forensic scientists have a lot on their plate. They not only need to identify the species that were killed from the remains, but they also need to identify the perpetrator. Additionally, wildlife forensic experts are also required to determine where the specimen originated from, if it was wild or a captive, as well as its age.

This is usually done by using wildlife forensic methods, wherein different parts of the victim (animal), including its blood, hair, teeth, tissue, claws, tusks, feathers or fur is collected. Sometimes, the weapon (if confiscated) or lethal material (poison, pesticide) is also analyzed. From these sources, DNA is extracted and amplified using PCR techniques and then sequenced.

Most often, mitochondrial DNA (passed from mother to offspring) is used, as it provides the best molecular markers. After sequencing, individual profiling is done wherein microsatellite markers are used to develop the individual's (victim and/or perpetrator) profile. This profile is extremely useful, as it can not only identify an animal, but also its biological relatives.

On the other hand, human DNA profiling and ballistics are generally used to identify the perpetrator. These techniques are also supported by microscopic tools involving the analysis of fingerprints, soil and hair. Examples where wildlife forensics has helped.

Case 1: Who killed the animal?

A poacher captured a wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) in one of Italy's national parks, where he later stabbed it to death. The remains of the animal were found by park authorities, along with the poacher, who denied killing the animal. Upon investigating his house, officers found a knife with bloodstains. From this knife, DNA was extracted and microsatellites were used to match the blood to that of the wild boar that had been killed. As it turned out, the poacher was lying and was later convicted, all thanks to the forensic evidence collected from his house.

Case 2: What did we just eat?

A recent study investigated meat confiscated from a restaurant in West Bengal (East India) that was thought to be that of a Greater Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*). With no morphological identity, the restaurant owner was booked for killing and selling meat of a protected species under the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972.

However, wildlife forensics helped prove the owner's innocence. Upon using molecular techniques, forensic specialists were able to determine that the meat was not from a protected species, but instead belonged to the Common quail (*Coturnix coturnix*). In this case, wildlife forensics helped prove the innocence of the wrongly accused, rather than help nab a criminal.

Case 3: What species was killed?

Three cases of illegal hunting were investigated in Brazil, wherein local authorities sent samples of two mammals and a bird that were killed by poachers. Once the DNA was extracted and sequenced, molecular markers were used by wildlife forensic experts to identify the species. These samples were compared with a genetic database of commonly hunted species in the region.

This analysis helped to identify the species as capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), Pampas deer (*Ozotoceros bezoarticus*), and Chaco chachalaca (*Oryzopsis canicollis*). In all three cases, the suspects turned out to be guilty and were summarily punished. Wildlife forensics clearly plays a vital role in bringing justice to numerous animals that have been wrongfully killed. However, there are still many battles that must be fought and won when it comes to curtailing the illegal trade of wildlife if we want to protect the incredible diversity of exotic life on this planet!

Why is India a major hub for wildlife trafficking?

- *India is not only a major source, but also a transit and a destination country for trafficked wildlife and wildlife products.*
- *International wildlife trafficking into and out of India mainly occurs through either the long international border along the Northeast or through airports. Chennai and Mumbai airports are major hubs for this illegal activity.*
- *Wildlife trafficking in India is driven by the demand for raw material like red sandalwood and ivory, and animal parts – particularly rhinoceros' horn and tiger parts – for traditional medicine, demand for meat, and the attraction towards exotic pets.*
- *When exotic live animals that have been smuggled into India are seized, they are sent to rescue centres or sanctuaries. Several international and national governmental organisations are teaming up to develop tools and networks that counter wildlife trafficking.*

Wildlife trafficking, which is the illegal trade of wild animals and plants, either as dead or live specimens, or their parts, has a huge negative effect on the world's environments, biodiversity, economies, governance, and health. It is a form of transnational organised crime that spans across many countries and involves poaching, smuggling, and illegal collection, or capture, of protected wildlife. According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), wildlife trafficking is the fourth largest form of transnational organized crime (after smuggling

of drugs, human trafficking, and counterfeiting) worth an estimated £15 billion per annum.

Despite being a part of the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora), India is currently one among the top 20 countries for wildlife trafficking, and among the top 10 for wildlife trafficking by air. Due to its mega diverse nature (India has 8% of the world's wildlife), and dense human population (which makes tracing illegal goods very difficult once they have entered domestic markets), India serves as both, a source, as well as a transit country for illegal wildlife and wildlife products.

Added to this, several other factors have made the fight against the illegal wildlife trade increasingly difficult. Amongst these are the porous international borders with China, Myanmar, and other Southeast Asian countries, a growing aviation market and the fast-expanding airport sector, and the use of social media as online marketplaces by wildlife traffickers.

Furthermore, smugglers of exotic wildlife species in India have even resorted to misusing the Voluntary Disclosure Scheme issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in 2020. The scheme aimed to regulate the growing market of exotic animals in India – which boomed after the complete ban on trade in Indian species – by allowing Indians to declare the possession of exotic wild species without any documentation before March 15, 2021. Smugglers of exotic wildlife species resort to misusing the Voluntary Disclosure Scheme issued by the MoEFCC in 2020.

Besides these reasons, there are major lacunae in laws that pertain to the ownership of exotic animals in India. People caught transporting exotic wildlife species can be charged with the crime only if it can be proven that they crossed an international border illegally with those animals. "Once inside India, there are no policies or laws that regulate the ownership of exotic species. The Wildlife Protection Law only applies to Indian wildlife," says Sanjeev Pednekar, founder of Prani, an education centre and pet sanctuary for rescued birds and animals in the outskirts of Bengaluru.



What species are most commonly trafficked in India?

Since India is not only a major source, but also a transit, and destination country for trafficked wildlife and wildlife products, a large number of species are illegally transported out of and into the country. According to the Smuggling in India report 2020–21, the DRI's (Directorate of Revenue Intelligence) most common wildlife and wildlife products that were seized from being smuggled out of India are ivory, turtles and tortoises (especially the Indian star tortoise), and red sandalwood (red sanders or *lalchandana*). Lately, there has been a decline in rhino horn trading from India; however, the country is fast becoming a major hub for pangolin poaching and trafficking. The trade in tiger parts also seems to be continuing unabated.

A pangolin at Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu.

In addition, ornamental fish such as the Channa barca or snakehead (endemic to the upper Brahmaputra basin) and the zebra loach (in the Western Ghats) are being fished to extinction in their natural habitats to feed the international trade in live aquarium fish. Along with these, wildlife trafficking has expanded to include trade in body parts of golden jackals, Asiatic black bears, leopards (for tantric uses and traditional medicines) and mongooses (for mongoose hair paintbrushes).

According to the Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce (TRAFFIC) Runway to Extinction report published in 2020, although the trafficking of Indian star tortoises out of India is declining, the smuggling of red eared slider turtles is on the rise. Instances of exotic animals such as kangaroos, marmosets, tamarins, and birds such as macaws

and parrots being transported across India are on the rise. The latest in this string of reports rolled in during March and April 2022, with videos of dehydrated and sick kangaroos rescued in West Bengal.

Apart from the illegal import and export of wildlife and wildlife products, India also has a roaring domestic market for wildlife meat and body parts for traditional medicine, including those of freshwater turtles, lorises, and frogs.

What is being done to reduce wildlife trafficking in India and what happens to the seized animals?

The DRI, which is in the forefront of the battle against smuggling, has teamed up with the Indian Customs as a part of the Green Customs initiative of the World Customs Organisation, to counter wildlife trafficking into and out of India. To combat the rising use of air transport in wildlife trafficking, a suite of tools to help law enforcement agencies in India battle wildlife smuggling have been developed by TRAFFIC, along with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Wildlife Fund-India (WWF-India), and the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB).

Apart from this, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) also has a short 20-minute training module to help spread awareness on wildlife trafficking through air transport. Airport authorities in Bengaluru have even set up a forest cell to tackle wildlife smuggling. The Counter Wildlife Trafficking program, run by the Wildlife Conservation Society-India, conducts training and sensitization workshops for state forest departments, police forces, customs officials, border security force units, and even the judiciary, on conducting crime scene investigations and promoting inter-agency collaborations.

In addition to all these initiatives, the WCCB has begun profiling criminals in a real-time database and will soon network with neighbouring countries (Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar) to stem trans boundary wildlife crime. Molecular biology tools, including DNA testing and bioinformatics are also being used in wildlife forensics to identify the point

of origin of trafficked animal products. In addition, citizen science initiatives, dog squads, and various DNA databases and reference libraries are being used to monitor animal populations susceptible to poaching and the wildlife trade. India also destroys seized wildlife products to send out a strong anti-poaching message.

However, despite these efforts wildlife trafficking in India is still rampant. India's CITES membership as well as its strong laws (Wildlife Protection Act, 1972) – prohibiting the trade of over 1,800 species of native plants, animals, and their products – are ineffective in tackling wildlife trafficking as these laws/advisories are often poorly communicated and enforced. In addition, wildlife experts say that India needs stronger laws to deal with exotic species that have been smuggled into the country, which is a huge lacuna that is exploited by smugglers to feed the exotic pet trade.

Most often, when exotic live animals that have been smuggled into India are seized, they are sent to rescue centres or sanctuaries. Since zoos are usually meant to showcase Indian native wildlife, they often do not have adequate quarantine centres or appropriate enclosures to properly manage seized exotic animals.

(The writer is a retired Deputy conservator of Forests, a practicing advocate, and a post graduate diploma holder in criminal justice and Forensic science from Central university, Hyderabad and can be accessed over email: vvhp53@gmail.com with mobile no 7893673767. He is a guest faculty in Central university Hyderabad on Cyber laws and IPR.)

Continuation from page No. 40

- body meeting. Necessary modifications are to be made in the byelaws accordingly.
3. The General body authorized the newly elected President, General Secretary, and the Treasurer to operate the association account and to make necessary changes required in the bank account with the Kotak Mahindra bank.
 4. It is also resolved that the association will support the State Retired Forest Officers' Association in connection with the programs taken up to improve the Forests. The Executive Committee members

Conclusion:

Experts think that there's still a lot to be done, starting with stricter laws. India lacks legislation that allows the CITES to be enforced beyond entry and exit points such as airports. This means that police officers in India cannot confiscate a species whose commerce is illegal under CITES and then question the culprit about where they acquired it.

At a time when international wildlife crime is on the rise, decimating wild populations of indigenous and endangered species, international cooperation is critical to combating the problem. The United Nations General Assembly passed the first-ever resolution on wildlife trafficking, urging countries to "adopt effective measures to prevent and combat the serious problem of crimes that have an environmental impact, such as illicit trafficking in wildlife and wildlife products...as well as poaching." In view of the global urgency to tackle wildlife crime, India's initiatives appear to be on the right path.

SOURCE: Library, Central university Hyderabad and Internet

of Karimnagar have felicitated all the members who have completed 75 years of age on the eve of Azadi ka Amruth Mahosthav. In his address the Chief guest Sri S. Malla Reddy has expressed his happy ness in conducting the meeting in a systematic way and thanked the committee for inviting him as Chief Guest. The meeting is concluded with vote of thanks proposed by Sri Rajender and dinner hosted by the members of Karimnagar (Photo: in the center colour pages)

General Secretary/ Organizing Secretary

Musings of An Octogenerian

Sardar Nauratan Singh



-----**A few years back**, I realized that after living together for around half a century, I have not gifted my wife anything but *DO CHUTKI* (two pinches of) *Sindoor*. I was filled with a sense of intense guilt.

I went to her to express my apology in a state of remorse. I gave her a pledge that I will get her the maximum family pension available unless I am killed by a bullet. And if by chance the bullet comes from a member of the ruling party, she will get much more "*chappar phad ke*".

With a bored look of nonchalance, she told me "Both options look good but the later is preferable. I will get rid of you earlier and also get some more to play about. But make the largesse showered clear of "*Chappar*" (roof). Cement is so costly nowadays.

-----**Now** with blessings of one and all, friends, and foes I have entered the league of Octogenarians de jure, whereas the de facto entry happened nine months earlier. There is a story behind this faux pas.

My dad was a cop. He happened to be every inch a Cop, a quintessential Cop, with *Danda* in one hand and a copy of IPC in the other. This was 1944, Purna, now in Maharashtra. He had a company of very jovial happy go lucky, bon viveur friends. I enjoyed their company more than my father.

As I was getting admitted in a school one of his friends suggested "*Are bhai, Sardar ka bachcha hai, chaar ekbar to ludkega hi, baad men naaukri nahin milegi. Iski umar chaar saal kam kar do.*" (get his age reduced by four years to make up for his inevitable demotions and stay in the race for a job).

Now, how can four years be removed from a three-year-old boy. So, a bunch of cops put their heads together paper and pencil in hand. When this happens, result is certain to come. It was decided that only nine months can be adjusted. One of them got Sept 1941 changed to June 1942 in my school register.

-----**Venerable** Buchi Raam Reddy garu is a celestial boon to our Association. Vanapremi is one of his children on record. "*Ye nav se navve saal ke bachon ka saathi inhi ka bachcha hai*".

Now our Association meetings have a beautifully designed agenda. Out of all its items, Buchiram Reddy Garu's 'OM Shanti Om' i.e *shradhanjali* to the departed, gets the cake. It is profound, solemn, melodious mellifluous and soulful. His baritone voice goes straight into the heart. It infuses a death wish among most of us. "*Ek teevr ichcha hoti hai ke inke nilkalne ke pahle hi nikallo thaake* (we get an intense desire to win over him in the race for kicking the bucket so that) *ek shandaar Om Shanti om apna bhi hojaye*".

-----**Very** early in my life I realized that my cranium box is empty. So, I outsourced my thinking role out of box. Now as a fait accompli it happened that the box I engaged for the job turned out to be an *ulti khopdi*, a little off tangent. It often makes the message outlandish. "*Aksar mere box ki soch reductio ad absurdum hoti hai yane*" i.e proving a point by disproving its opposite.

It was a delight for me to find that our Association is very seriously delving upon the issue of naming itself. My box felt that the name of our Association is too long and by the time you finish the name an inquisitive buddy goes to sleep. My out of box suggestion was a

Contd.. on page No.58



Faith, Duty, and Mutual Respect (The Case of Wildlife Trophies in SSSIHL, Puttaparthi)

Dr. K. Tirupataiah, IFS (Retd.)

Introduction

Ananthapur district is unique in many ways. Severe recurring droughts, Wealth of mineral resources, politically very enlightened people, and with an abode of Sri Satya Sai Baba. What a variety of richness? In that sense, every one of the four Rayalaseema districts are very different, and at the same time similar, in their own respective basket of unique features. Faith, old or new, runs very deep in the nerves of people of Rayaseema. If it is Srisailam and Mantralayam for Kurnool, it is Devuni Kadapa and Vontimitta for Kadapa. If it is Kanipakam and Tirupati for Chittoor it is Kadiri (Narasimha), Pennahobilam and Puttaparthi for Ananthapur.

The Forest Department

Ananthapur was perhaps the largest Forest division in the undivided Andhra Pradesh. It also carried the common gene pool of the people of the district in the sense of tolerance, perseverance, survival tactics and faith. Woodlots in and around Temples, including Puttaparthi bear its integration with the larger society.

The Satya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL)

Sri Satya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) in Puttaparthi is a deemed University where thousands of students studying in various branches, including Sciences. The Institute had, as its administrative head, a senior retired IAS Officer.

The case of Wildlife trophies and other articles: How they came

The incidents narrated here belong to a time when Sri Satya Sai Baba was alive and thousands of devotees (faithful) from around the world (83 countries then had organizations of devotees of Sri Satya Sai Baba) used to pay a visit to Puttaparthi. One of the ways to give

offerings to the Swami was to gift wildlife articles and trophies. Over a period of time, the number of such offerings grew not only in quantity but also in variety. All these items are well preserved and displayed in the SSSIHL.

As it happens in a democratic society, someone petitioned asking about the legality of such offerings and such possession. It is pertinent to mention here that in those times officers of the highest positions in government, across services, were regular visitors to Puttaparthi. One can easily predict the unenviable position of field forest officers and staff on what to do.

Doing Duty Faithfully

The file related to this petition already grew in size. Though no action was/could be taken on any one (pilgrims, the SSSIHL, Forest staff) keeping in view the importance of the institution involved, I felt that in the long run, that's not the way forward.

I never visited Puttaparthi earlier to that time. I thought the best way to go forward is to approach the Registrar of the Institute and talk with him on this issue. But many doubted if he would allow discussion on this subject. But I tried and got an appointment with him. He was very cordial in welcoming and inquiring about me (who just started his career).

After niceties, I told him, "Sir, I came here to discuss with you about the wildlife trophies and other articles in your possession". He did not get angry or any such thing. He said, "Earlier also your department gave notices. You know this is Puttaparthi and these are all gifted by devotees. What can we do?". I replied, "Sir, you served in the government for a very long time. You know what works on faith, sometimes does not work in Law". I thought he would get angry for mentioning law

to an IAS officer of such seniority and repute. He just smiled and said, "Many people talked about this earlier. But do you have a solution?"

I breathed a sigh of relief that he is now open to a solution. I had to nicely integrate my duty with a little bit of faith and get the job done. I replied, "Sir, I have a solution. But that requires your intervention to allow me and my staff free access to all areas of your Institution.". He said, "You mean a raid?". I reverentially replied, "No sir, we all will come in civil dress. We will not in any way cause embarrassment to any one over here".

He was getting a little bit restive. He asked, "So, what would you propose?". I elaborated on my idea. Sir, we will take measurements of all wildlife trophies and articles and make an inventory for you. Then we will help draft a letter from you to me (DFO) enclosing the inventory and highlighting the fact about how they came in to your possession. This is an Institute of Higher Learning where Natural & Biological Sciences are also taught. So, you highlight that these articles would be of great use for teaching Zoology/wildlife.

Convinced with our suggestion and help offered, the Registrar instructed the concerned to extend all required help to our team.

The Inventory making

After a few days, a dedicated team started its work and the inventory making took a few weeks. For many of us it was an experience of a lifetime. There were trophies and articles of animals that we never saw or touched their parts. It was also a challenge to measure at correct places and take all required measurements. Animal parts as North as North America (like Puma) and as South as South Africa (like Springbok) were there. It was a mystery as to how these parts could be brought across Continents without any issue.

(The writer is retired PCCF, Telangana and currently working as Chief Consultant (Training) at Dr Marri Channa Reddy HRD Institute of Telangana, Hyderabad. Feedback-Mobile:8885532021 Email:kota_86@rediffmail.com)

"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving."

- Mother Teresa

Mutual respect for Way forward

Once the inventory of articles and trophies was made, it was discussed with the Registrar. I requested him to undertake that these articles would be used only for educational purposes. I then said, 'Sir, I have one more duty'. He was not expecting some more demand. I said, "Sir, The Organization of Satya Sai devotees is very vast with obedient devotees. It has to inform all devotees not to bring any wildlife related material hereafter. Inform all national bodies across the world and publicize it. Ensure that such material is verified at source of travel of devotees and removed there itself". Hereafter, it would be your responsibility to ensure that we do not need to come again with a notice.

With the accompanying letter of the Registrar, the inventory was signed and handed over to me in response to our notice under WL Protection Act. These were then forwarded, through proper channel, to the Chief Wildlife Warden. In the background, everyone concerned at higher echelons was kept informed that what was required under law was being done in the most decent way. After careful examination of the purpose of possession of the wildlife articles, the CWL Warden issued possession certificates to SSSIHL. It was for the first time that the institute came to hold the wildlife trophies and articles as per law. It was pure Joy on both sides.

It was one of the many experiences that Ananthapur gifted me. It taught how to honour 'Faith' and at the same time carry out 'Duty' in the most diligent way. The interactions with the Registrar taught lessons in terms of 'mutual respect' irrespective of the huge age/experience gap between us. Of course, the whole exercise could not have been successful without the support of our Conservators and the 'faith' of the forest staff in 'duty'.

Convocation of 31st Batch Forest Beat Officers Induction Training Programme



The convocation of the 31st Batch Forest Beat Officer Induction training program was conducted on 30.09.2022 in Telangana State Forest Academy, Dulapally, Hyderabad. The (6) month training program with (55) Trainee Officers, which includes (14) women Officers, was commenced on 04.03.2022 and concluded on 30.09.2022. The Batch constitutes of (10) post-graduates, (42) graduates and (03) members with Intermediate qualification.

Sri P.V. Raja Rao, IFS, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Director, Telangana State Forest Academy, Dulapally, Hyderabad attended the ceremony as Chief Guest. After inspecting the passing out parade, he participated in the convocation ceremony. Smt S.A. Nagini Banu, Course Director of the Training Programme submitted the course report. The Chief Guest gave away the certificates to the passed-out Trainee Officers. He also presented Gold Medals and Merit certificates to the Trainee Officers who excelled in certain subjects/categories. K. Anusha of Khammam Division topped the training course bagging (4) Gold Medals, while P. Madhusudhan secured (2) Gold Medals and M. Sravan Kumar, R. Srinivas, B. Rajashekhar, B. Chinna, B. Venkatesh, R. Prashanth and B. Jhansi Rani got (1) Gold Medal each.

Sharing their experiences, the out-going trainee officers said that they learnt several new things in a short period of time in the Academy and the tour programs were of great experience for the trainee officers which gave

insights into the nature and would be immensely helpful in their professional and personal life. In addition to gaining of knowledge and skills, they learnt lessons of discipline, time management, physical fitness, etc., they said.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest Sri. P.V. Raja Rao said that Forest Beat Officer plays an indispensable role in protecting the environment and considered to be the backbone in forest protection. The learnings got in the Academy by the Trainee Officers shall be implemented in the field and one shall be learning new things continuously and update oneself according to the prevailing circumstances which will be useful in the professional life, he said.

Sri. G. Ravinder, former Divisional Forest Officer participated as special guest in the ceremony. Sri. S. Ramesh, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests and Additional Director, TS Forest Academy; Smt Praveena, IFS, Joint Director, TS Forest Academy; Deputy Directors, Ch. Ganga Reddy, V. Anjaneyulu, V. Rama Mohan; Forest Range Officers, M. Vamshi Krishna, Y. Subhash Chandra Yadav, P. Sunitha, K. Shiva Jyothi, M. Ram Mohan, Baba Khadar Vali; Deputy Range Officer, Uma Rani; Forest Section Officer, Praveen Kumar, Beat Officer Trainees, Range Officer Trainees, relatives of the Trainee Officers and other staff attended the ceremony.

- **M. Ram Mohan, FRO/Asst. Director,
TSFA, Dulapally, Hyd.**

LEGAL NOTES

Lakhan & Anr Vs. State of Chattisgarh thro' F.D.O, Fingeshwar

- K. Buchi Ram Reddy, IFS (Retd.)



In this case, bail application was first dismissed on 17.11.2015; the offence alleged was killing eight cheetals and an ox. Second bail application was filed in the High Court of Chattisgarh at Bilaspur under Sec. 439 Cr.P.C which was taken on file in MCRC No. 2800. The accused are charged for the offence under Sections 9,30,50 & 51 of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972. The allegation is that the accused persons mixed urea into the water of a forest pond and by drinking such water eight cheetals and one ox died. The accused took away the dead animals. The place of offence is in a reserved forest block 34 khudsa. The case was heard by the Hon'ble Justice Gautam Bhaduri.

The learned counsel for the petitioners argued that the case is bailable as the maximum punishment is up to three years as the animal killed is in Sch. III and the punishment may extend to three years imprisonment and fine which may extend to Rs. Twenty-five thousand or both. It was submitted that the offence being bailable, the accused are entitled to bail.

The Government Pleader argued that the offence is committed in a reserved forest and that it is not bailable.

The court examined the case analytically by going through all the provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act and found that the wild animals killed are listed at S.No. 5 of the Schedule III of the Wildlife Protection Act and the penalty is provided in Sec. 51. The court also examined the penal provisions which are of three kinds Viz.

1. On conviction the accused are punishable with imprisonment which may extend to three years, but the offence should not relate to any specified animal or place.
2. According to the first proviso if the offence is related to an animal of Sch. I or part II of Sch. II or the offence is committed in a sanctuary or national park or involves altering boundary of the sanctuary or national park, such offence is punishable with imprisonment for not less than three years and may extend to seven years and fine which shall not be less than ten thousand rupees.
3. According to the second proviso if the offence is aggravated, the imprisonment shall not be less than three years and may extend to seven years and also fine which shall not be less than twenty-five thousand rupees,

The Hon'ble court then focused its attention to the procedural aspect of awarding punishment as laid down in the Criminal Procedure Code.

The case before the court falls in the category of cases punishable below three years and up to three years and upwards but not more than seven years, the offence is cognizable and non-bailable. The court disagreed with the ruling cited and that it is not applicable in the present circumstances. Furthermore, taking the facts into consideration that no circumstances has taken place after rejection of earlier bail petition, the court was not inclined to entertain the present bail petition again. The petition is rejected on 29.07.2016.

- **Source: Internet**

Knowledge is no guarantee of good behaviour, but ignorance is virtual guarantee of bad behaviour.

-Martha C. Nussbaum.

Continuation from page No. 53

nick name spelled, R, O, M, E, O s, that is Romeos (Retired old men eating out) You are right. it was not accepted.

----- **Anyway**, nobody is listening to us nowadays. "*Kaha jaata hai ke Agle waqton ke hain ye log inhen kuch na kaho aur, na inki suno. Are bhai* since years together I am saying "NO" to alcohol, but it is not listening, and I am helpless.

-----**Friends** Indians & fellow countrymen, now I am going to tell you about my illustrious career.

I was the cynosure of all the eyes. *Sabki aankhon ka*

(The author is retired DFO and can be contacted over mobile number: 9490935910 & email: sardarnavratana@gmail.com).

taara Ladla. The department was convinced that I was a blessing, a gift from heavens, to have entered into their cadres. My colleagues whose job was to supervise my work, were enamored by my out of the box suggestions. They got inspired for immediate action. Some of these valuable suggestions were –'Damn it', 'Don't be stupid', 'Don't talk rot', 'Mind your own business', 'Get lost or I'll beat you up'.

These pearls of wisdom were highly appreciated and amply rewarded. A few years before my retirement I was gratefully decorated with a dozen charge sheets and in a token of gratitude presented with almost all the acts provided in the CCA rules.

OBITUARY

Sri GADDAM GURUNATHUDU

(10.05.1949 - 2.10.2022)



Sri Gaddam Gurunathudu was born on 10th May'1949 in Kadapa of Andhra Pradesh. He was the eldest son of his parents. He grew up and studied at Chennur (Kadapa district) at his uncle's place. As a student he was brilliant. He received a standing ovation as a student of S.S.L.C from the audience for reciting the slokas of Bhagavadgeetha during his schooldays and the headmaster gave him a handshake while presenting him with an award.

After finishing his B.Sc graduation , he did his M .Sc from Sagar University, M.P and B.Ed in Kurnool. He was selected as Forest apprentice in 1975 and he belonged to the alumni of S.F.R.C, Coimbatore (1975-77) . His first posting was at Nandyal of Kurnool district as Forest Range officer.

He worked at various places during his tenure as a Forest officer namely Mulugu, Atmakur, Siddavatam, Bhadrachalam, Eluru, Kadapa, and Kothapur in various capacities before finally retiring at Achampet as D.F.O on 31st May 2007. His better half Smt. Sowbhagyavathi too being an employee retired as Asst.manager in APSRTC. He was respected by one and all due to his soft-spoken attitude and helping nature throughout his lifetime. After his retirement he was active in temple affairs and charity works and held the post of Vice President of the managing committee of Sai Baba temple in Kadapa.

He was a voracious reader of books and had a large collection of them. He was quite empathetic. He had two sons Kalyan Chakravarty and Krishna Swaroop. The elder son settled in USA and the younger one works in Bangalore. Both of them are software Engineers and are happily married. He was blessed with four grand children.

He left a mark as a successful and efficient Forest officer and was liked by his superiors, subordinate staff and friends as well because of his sincerity, perseverance and above all his attitude for helping others. He breathed his last on 02-10-2022 due to cardiac arrest.

He may not be there with us, but his memories will live on forever.

- V.V. Hariprasad



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Spot-bellied eagle-owl (*Bubo nipalensis*).

Photo: Mohd. Hayath, FRO.

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