

## U P STATE BIODIVERSITY BOARD, LUCKNOW

# BIODIV NEWS



**Vol.: 9, Issue: 36, July – Sept 2018, A Quarterly e-Newsletter**

### Editorial

#### Esteemed Readers,

This quarter saw the celebration of the International Day for Vulture Awareness. The International Vulture Awareness Day is celebrated each year on the first Saturday of September. The aim is to carry out the conservational activities by the different institution and individual participating in it.

On this occasion, Uttar Pradesh State Biodiversity Board in collaboration with Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation Lab, Department of Zoology and Institute for Wildlife Sciences, ONGC, Centre for Advanced Studies, University of Lucknow celebrated International Vulture Awareness Day 2018 during 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018. The aim of the programme was to create awareness regarding Vultures Conservation among the students through various competitions like Quiz, Poster making and PowerPoint competitions etc.

Besides, several awareness programs at various levels were organized to explain the value of vultures, their ecological value and importance in nature. Publicity materials like fliers, pamphlets etc. were distributed to the local people and students.

**-Editor**

### Contents

- 1- International Day for Vulture Awareness 02<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 2018
- 2- Newspaper Clippings

**Biodiversity is life.**

**Biodiversity is our life.**

*"You are an integral part of nature: your fate is tightly linked with biodiversity the huge variety of other animals and plants, the places they live and their surrounding environments, all over the world"*

# 1-International Vulture Awareness Day (IVAD)

The International Vulture Awareness Day has grown from vulture awareness days run by Birds of Prey Programme in South Africa and Hawk Conservancy Trust in England, who decided to work together and expand the initiative into an International event. This day is dedicated to vulture conservation so as to publicize the conservation and importance of vultures to wider audience and highlight the important work being carried out by world's vulture conservationists. The first international vulture awareness day was celebrated on first Saturday of September 2009 and since then.



The International Vulture Awareness Day is celebrated each year on the first Saturday of September. The aim is to carry out the conservational activities by the different institution and stakeholders /participating in it from different countries.

The Uttar Pradesh State Biodiversity Board in collaboration with Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation Lab, Department of Zoology and Institute for Wildlife Sciences, ONGC, Centre for Advanced Studies, University of Lucknow celebrated International Vulture Awareness Day 2018 during 1<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

**1<sup>st</sup> September 2018:** Like previous years the IVAD was celebrated with great enthusiasm several activities were organized among the school students of Lucknow as well as fieldwork in different districts of Uttar Pradesh. Approx. **150 Students of 15 schools** viz. CMS, Navyug Radiance, Ramadhin Inter College, New Way School, Bright Way College, Universal public Inter College and many more involved in different events like Painting on Flying Vultures, Power Point presentation on Vultures and Quiz competitions based on Vultures. Winners of the events were awarded with prizes and certificates. The details of the events organized are given below:

Time	Event	Group
10:30-11:30 am	Quiz Competition on “Vultures”	Group A & B
11:30-12:00 pm	Lecture on “Vultures and Vulture Restaurants”	Amita Kanaujia
12:00-1:00 pm	Poster Making Competition (Hall I) on “ Flying Vultures”	Group A & B
	PowerPoint Presentation (Hall II) on “Vulture Restaurants”	Group B
1:30 pm onwards	Valedictory function & Prize distribution	

**Winners of events held at Institute for Wildlife sciences (ONGC)  
University of Lucknow**

**Quiz Competition**

Theme: “*Vultures*”

Group-A

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Mauli Agarwal	VI	City Montessori School	First



**Students participating in Quiz competition**

**Group-B**

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Ananya Mittal	IX	Navayuga Radiance Senior Secondary school	First
2.	Anamika Singh	X	Ramadhir Singh Inter College	Second
3.	Ashu	X	Ramadhir Singh Inter College	Third
4.	Vansh Mishra	X	Ramadhir Singh Inter College	Consolation



**Students of Group B participating in Quiz competition**



**Students of Group B participating in Quiz competition**



### Group-c

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Arshita Jain	M.Sc	University of Lucknow	First
2.	Rakiya Umar	M.Sc	University of Lucknow	Second
3.	RasheedaKhatoon	M.Sc	University of Lucknow	Third



Students of Group C participating in Quiz competition



Students of Group C participating in Quiz competition

### Poster Competition

Theme: “Flying Vultures”

#### Group-A

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Mauli Agarwal	VI	C.M.S	First

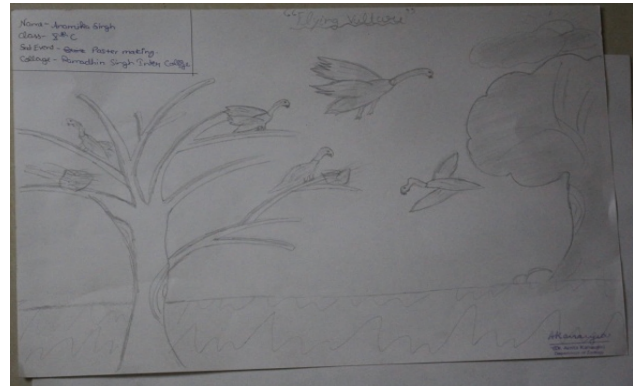
#### Group-B

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Tushita Ojha	X	Ramadhir Singh Inter College	First
2.	Anamika Singh	X	Ramadhir Singh Inter College	Second
3.	Gulshan Kumar	X	Ramadhir Singh Inter College	Third
4.	Vansh Mishra	X	Ramadhir Singh Inter College	Consolation

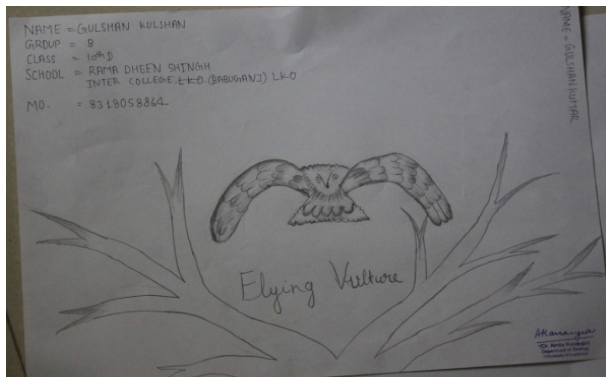




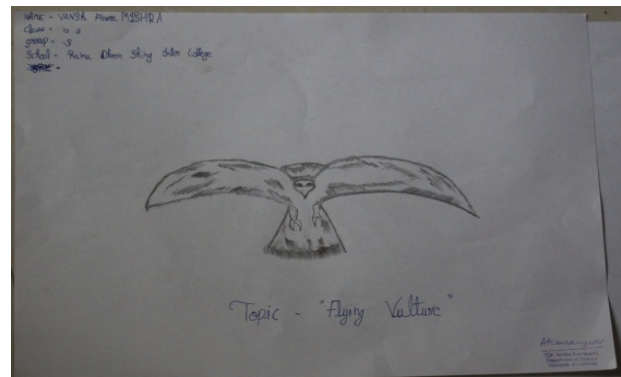
**Tushita Ojha, X, RSIC, First prize**



**Anamika Singh, X, RSIC, Second**



**Gulshan Kumar, X, RSIC, Third**



**Vansh Mishra, X, RSIC, Consolation**

## PowerPoint Presentation

*Theme: " Vultures Restaurants "*

**Group-B (Only for Group –B)**

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Ananya Mittal	IX	Navayuga Radiance Senior Secondary school	First



Power Point Presentation on Vulture Restaurant by Ananya Mittal Navayuga Radiance Senior Secondary school





Certificate & Price Distribution by Madhu Tripathi , University of Lucknow



Students with their certificate

**2<sup>nd</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> September 2018:** Awareness campaigns were organized to spread the awareness regarding the importance of Vultures, their role in food cycle and the causes and consequences of their decline globally as well as at regional level in the local mass and school students of remote areas. The students and volunteers visited the vulture's sites in Unnao, Kanpur, Lucknow and Raibareilly to study and explore the habitat of vultures, their roosting behavior and feeding behavior. Students came to know about the association of vultures with other species *i.e.* crows, dogs, black kites, cattle egret in their feeding sites and other environmental factors.



Participants with their Vulture Poster



Awareness campaigns in Schools



## Winners of events held at Bright Way College

### Quiz Competition

Theme: “*Vultures*”

Group-A

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Divyansh Singh	V	Bright Way College	First
2.	Harshit Tiwari	VIII	Bright Way College	Second
3.	Aryan Prasad	VIII	Bright Way College	Third
4.	Riya Kashyap	IX	Bright Way College	Third
5.	Mohammad Faizam	IX	Bright Way College	Consolation
6.	Asif Aziz	X	Bright Way College	Consolation



**Certificate distribution to the winners of Quiz competition**



**Price distribution to the winners of Quiz competition**

### Poster Competition (Robin Hood Academy)

Theme: “*Flying Vultures*”

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Mohit Gautam	-	Robin Hood Academy	First
2.	Arvind	-	Robin Hood Academy	Second
3.	Anshu	-	Robin Hood Academy	Third
4.	Rohan	-	Robin Hood Academy	Consolation



**Mohit Gautam, Robin Hood Academy, First**



**Arvind, Robin Hood Academy, Second**



**Anshu, Robin Hood Academy, Third**



**Rohan, Robin Hood Academy, Consolation**

### **Poster Competition (Universal Public School)**

Theme: "*Flying Vultures*"

Group A

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Riya Yadav	8th	Universal Public School	First
2.	Priyanshi Rawat	8th	Universal Public School	Second
3.	Shweta Sharma	8th	Universal Public School	Third
4.	Divayanshi Yadav	5th	Universal Public School	Consolation
5.	Abhishek Verma	7th	Universal Public School	Consolation



**Winners of Group A**

### Group B

S.No.	Name	Class	Institute	Position
1.	Sandhya Verma	12th	Universal Public School	First
2.	Nancy Kashyap	12th	Universal Public School	Second
3.	Ayush Kumar	9th	Universal Public School	Third
4.	Zeeshan Rizvi	9th	Universal Public School	Consolation
5.	Sandhya Jameen	12th	Universal Public School	Consolation





**Winners of Group B**

## Outreach Activity

Awareness programs were organized at various levels to sensitize local peoples about the vulture's declining population. The role and importance of vulture were very well explained to them. Publicity materials like fliers, pamphlets were also distributed to them.



**Mass Awareness amongst the Public**

## 2- Newspaper Clippings

The Hindu – 04 July, 2018

THE HINDU  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 4, 2018

### Koala bear genome decoded for first time

IUCN classifies the species as 'vulnerable'


ASWATHI PACHA

The koalas of Australia are not just famous for their cuteness. They have been an unsolved mystery among scientists for their strange eating habits – they enjoy the leaves of eucalyptus that would be toxic or even fatal to most mammals – and their exceptional parental care.

Now an international team of scientists has successfully sequenced the whole genome of the marsupial and answered all the burning questions about the critter. The study published in *Nature Genetics* was authored by 54 scientists from seven countries and the whole genome was found to consist over 26,000 genes. "The genome provides a springboard for the conservation of this biologically unique species," said co-lead author Katherine Belov, University of Sydney.

They found expansions within a particular gene family (P450 gene) and report that these genes help the Koala detoxify the eucalyptus leaves. These genes were found to be expressed in many tissues, especially the liver, indicating its role in detoxification. ".... the koala has evolved an excellent toolkit to deal with eating highly toxic eucalypts, one made up of lots of copies of the same (or very similar) tools," explains Dr. Will Nash, one of the authors from Earlham Institute, U.K.

**Milk proteins**  
They also found novel lactation proteins in the Koala bears. They report that these proteins protect the young ones in the pouch



Scientists are looking for DNA clues for vaccines against diseases.

and help it develop a strong immune system. "We characterised the main components of the mothers' milk - which is crucial for koala joeys - born the size of a jellybean and weighing half of one gram," said Dr. Belov. "We identified genes that allow the koala to fine-tune milk protein composition across the stages of lactation, to meet the changing needs of their young."

Koala bears are born after just 34-36 days of gestation without an immune system and spend almost six months developing in the pouch. "It also appears these proteins may have an antimicrobial role, showing activity against a range of bacterial and fungal species, including *Chlamydia pecorum*, the strain known to cause ocular and reproductive disease in koalas," adds Dr. Belov.

The koala bear has a highly specific diet and habitat loss and clearing of native vegetation has brought down its population. "Our next efforts must be in the application of these findings to genetically manage koala populations, advance the treatment of the diseases affecting koalas," said Prof. Rebecca Johnson, lead author.



## The Hindu – 11 July, 2018

THE HINDU  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2018

### Fossil of first 'giant dinosaur' species found in Argentina

It was about three times the size of the largest Triassic dinosaurs from its era

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
BUENOS AIRES

Giant dinosaurs lived on the earth much earlier than previously thought, according to a team of excavators in Argentina, who discovered the remains of a 200-million-year old species.

The species, baptised *Ingenia prima*, was about three times the size of the largest Triassic dinosaurs from its era. It was discovered in the Balde de Leyes dig site in San Juan province, 1100 km west of the Argentine capital Buenos Aires.

The finding was published in the *Nature Ecology & Evolution* journal on Monday. "As soon as we found it, we realised it was something different. We found a shape, the first giant one among all the dinosaurs. That's the surprise," said Cecilia Apaldetti, a government and San Juan University researcher.

Excavators found several vertebrae from the neck and tail as well as fore and hind leg bones. The species "exhibits a growth strategy that was unknown until now and indicates that gigantism originated much earlier than was thought," said Ms. Apaldetti, the study's co-author.

These were "herbivore dinosaurs, quadrupeds, easily recognisable by their very long neck and tail, and from the sauropod group," she added. Before this discovery, it was thought that gigantism developed during the Jurassic period, around 180 million years ago.

Fellow co-author Ricardo Martinez believes the *Ingenia prima* is from "a Late Triassic period, possibly 205 million years" ago.

The Triassic period extended from around 250-200 million years ago and the Jurassic from 200-145 million years ago.

According to scientists, *Ingenia prima* was the first dinosaur species to reach gigantism.

The dinosaur's bone fragments displayed cyclical and seasonal growth, with a different kind of tissue to other sauropods, which allowed it to grow very quickly. It's believed that the species grew to eight to 10 meters tall and weighed around 10 tonnes, equal to two or three African elephants.

New finding: An investigator working on the extraction of the remains of a giant dinosaur from the Balde de Leyes formation, Argentina; and right, a reconstruction of *Ingenia prima*.



## The Hindu – 16 July, 2018

THE HINDU  
MONDAY, JULY 16, 2018

### Golden jackal faces threat in its habitat

Destruction of mangrove cover in A.P. may trigger man-animal conflict

T. APPALA NAIDU  
MACHILIPATNAM

Destruction of mangrove cover in the Bandar Reserve Forest (BRF) is forcing the golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) out of its habitat, triggering a conflict with the local communities.

Recently, *The Hindu* documented how a young golden jackal was swimming in the brackish waters, away from its habitat, looking for prey near the Palletummalapalem village in Machilipatnam mandal in Krishna district.

"We have recorded several golden jackals in the BRF through camera traps. The



Desperate measure: A golden jackal in search of prey outside its habitat in the Bandar Reserve Forest area. • T. APPALA NAIDU

sighting, out of its habitat, is a sign of its destruction," said A. Appa Rao, an expert engaged in the restoration of the mangrove cover.

The conservation status of the animal is the 'least concern' and it preys on wild crab and fish.

Amid uproar over the

aqua ponds, the Vigilance authorities in 2017 recommended to the State government to hand over the 24,363 acres under the BRF and the BRF extension (I to IV) to the Forest department for protection.

Since 1970 (G.O.No. 2204), the BRF has been in the hands of the Revenue department as the final notification to de-reserve the forest land (25,259 acres) was still pending owing to various reasons. The Revenue authorities, on the other hand, are helpless in preventing the encroachment of the mangrove along the Machilipatnam coastline.



the pioneer  
LUCKNOW | TUESDAY | JULY 17, 2018

## Hybrid mango varieties with high nutrition value

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The Central Institute of Sub tropical Horticulture (CISH) has developed several hybrid mango varieties with high nutritive value. More than 100 mango have been studied for nutraceuticals in pulp and peel. Interestingly, in addition to fruit pulp, mango fruit peel is also rich in these compounds.


"The study indicated that 'Langda' is rich in total antioxidant activity but low in carotenoids. Wide variation in the major nutraceuticals of mango varieties provides opportunities for exploitation as nutraceutically rich variety or use as parent for hybridisation," CISH director Shailendra Rajan said. "Arunika, a red-blushed hybrid developed by CISH, has a great consumer appeal and is additionally high in mangiferin and lupeol content. These bioactive compounds help in reducing blood glucose level by inhibiting glucose absorption from the intestine. Mangiferin has antioxidant properties helpful in protection against breast and colon cancers. Lupeol found in mango is reported to show a range of pharmacological activities against various disease conditions such as inflammation, arthritis, diabetes, cardiovascular ailments, renal disorder, hepatic toxicity, microbial infections and cancer," he said. Similarly, 'Saheb Pasand', a variety which is the sweetest one, also has high lupeol. It has double the high beta carotenoid content when compared to rich varieties. This compound is also found in commercial varieties like Kesar, Dussehri and Malgoa while Chausa, Janardhan Pasand and Banganpalli are poor in vitamin A. Mango hybrids are under evaluation for this unique characteristic of mango. A few decades ago, CISH had a mandate of developing red-coloured varieties to tap the export

market, which was dominated by coloured mangoes from Brazil and other Latin American countries.

Those days, consumers from the US and European countries were only aware of the qualities of red-coloured mangoes. The red appearance of the fruit was the target trait but gradually, the increasing awareness about medicinal properties of mangoes due to bioactive compounds has given a new direction of developing varieties rich in bioactive compounds.

Mango varieties differ from each other in shape, colour, size, aroma, taste and many other characters. In the same way, they also show large variation in the bioactive compounds. Some commercial varieties have high potential in the market but they are poor in nutraceutical value. Some of the varieties are high on these compounds but are not known to common people and unavailable in the market. Higher nutraceutical value will help in recognition and make them popular for fetching a better price in the market," the CISH director said.

He said researches had indicated that the variability in mango varieties was associated with varied amounts of nutraceuticals and thus several traditional varieties might be a treasure house for single or several bioactive compounds.



LUCKNOW THE HINDU  
FRIDAY, JULY 27, 2018

## Endangered elephant shot dead

Villagers on Borneo Island killed the pygmy jumbo for destroying their crops

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KUALA LUMPUR

A pygmy elephant was shot dead on Borneo Island after it destroyed villagers' crops, a Malaysian wildlife official said on Thursday, the latest of the endangered creatures to be killed.

The male elephant, believed to be about four years old, was found on Monday by the side of a road in the state of Sabah, on the Malaysian part of Borneo, local

wildlife department director Augustine Tuuga said.

He said the "merciless" killing was carried out near a remote settlement, and authorities were investigating who was responsible.

"(The elephant) was killed out of revenge for destroying crops," he said, adding the crops included palm oil trees.

He said that the creature's tusks remained intact, indicating the elephant was not



The body of the Borneo pygmy elephant. ■ AFP

killed by poachers seeking to sell its ivory on the black market.

It was the latest case in Malaysia of human-animal conflict, which happens when human settlements or agricultural plantations expand into a species's natural habitat.

Malaysia is home to vast tracts of rainforest and a kaleidoscope of exotic wildlife, from elephants to orangutans and tigers, but the numbers of many rare species have fallen dramatically in recent decades.

THE HINDU  
SUNDAY, JULY 29, 2018

## These beautiful strangers now thrive in India

Tamil Nadu has the highest number of exotic plants among 471 aliens

**AATHIRA PERINCHERY KOCHIT**

These 'aliens' are here to stay. As many as 471 plant species that are alien or exotic – not native to India – are 'naturalised', for they can thrive in the country's wildernesses by forming stable populations, says a recent report.

This list of naturalised exotic or alien species, ranging from the common guava (*Psidium guajava*) to prolific

invasive species such as lantana (*Lantana camara*), has been compiled in a recent study published in *Biological Invasions*, an international journal dedicated to the patterns and processes by which organisms invade ecosystems they are not usually found in.

**Ecosystem altered**  
Naturalised species reproduce naturally in the environments they colonise. Invasive species do this so prolifically that they alter the workings of the natural ecosystems they colonise or invade. Lantana, for instance, replaces undergrowth and prevents native undershrubs and plants from surviving.

**SUNDAY SPECIAL**

An international team – including scientists from the University of Delhi's Centre for Environmental Management of Degraded Ecosystems (CEMDE), the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) in Kolkata, Uttarakhand's Central Himalaya Environment Association and Andhra Pradesh's Sri Krishnadevaraya University – collated information on alien plant species from several sources, ranging from online plant lists to old compilations of India's national and regional flora.

**Tamil Nadu leads**  
The team also developed the first lists of naturalised plants for each State; these lists reveal that 110 alien plants now naturally occur in more than 31 States in India. At 332, Tamil Nadu has the highest number of naturalised exotics, followed by Kerala (280), while Lakshadweep has the least (07).

The distribution across Indian States of over 20 of these naturalised species (in the list of 471) is unknown. A majority of these naturalised plants are herbs such as the invasive Siam weed *Chromolaena odorata*, native to south and central America.

**Continued on Page 10**



**Naturalised aliens:** A butterfly feeding on a *Tridax daisy*, an exotic, and *Mimosa pudica*, from South and Central America.

15 • लखनऊ • रविवार • 29 जुलाई 2018

हिन्दुस्तान

आज का दिन 2003 में

## विश्व बाघ दिवस आज

# टाइगर रिजर्व ने दी बाघों को नई जिंदगी



अवैध शिकार की वजह से वर्ष 1970 में बाघों के अस्तित्व पर ही खतरा मंडराने लगा था। उस समय कुछ सौ बाघ बच गए थे, जिससे नजबूर होकर सरकार को बाघ संरक्षण का कार्यक्रम शुरू करना पड़ा। इसी कड़ी में बनाए गए टाइगर रिजर्व ने एक बार फिर बाघों को नई जिंदगी दी।

**50**  
टाइगर रिजर्व देश के 18 राज्यों में बनाए गए हैं

**2.2**  
फीसदी देश का कुल भौगोलिक क्षेत्र इसके अंतर्गत

**90**  
हजार वर्ग किलोमीटर वन क्षेत्र में बाघ पाए जाते हैं

**मिली सफलता**

1410	2010	2226
जंगली बाघ 2006 में देश में मौजूद थे	में जंगली बाघों की संख्या 1701 हुई	बाघ 2014 में प्राकृतिक वातावरण में थे

**जब ख़तरे में पड़ा अस्तित्व**

- 19वीं सदी के अंत तक 50 हजार से एक लाख बाघ भारतीय जंगलों में थे • 1970 में शिकार की वजह से बाघों की संख्या कुछ सौ के करीब पहुंची।

**खतरा टला नहीं**

- 2008 में मध्यप्रदेश के पन्ना टाइगर रिजर्व से 30 बाघ खत्म हुए • 1.5 लाख हेक्टेयर औसतन हर साल जंगलों का सफाया हो रहा

**बढ़ा संघर्ष**

- 50 के करीब लोगों की मौत दो दशक में पीलीभीत और दुधवा में
- फरवरी 2017 में छह लोगों को मारने वाले बाघ को पकड़ा गया
- अक्टूबर 2017 में चार लोगों को मारने वाली बाघिन मारी गई

**दुधवा और पीलीभीत के जंगल में बढ़े बाघ**

नेपाल और उत्तराखंड से जुड़े दुधवा और पीलीभीत के जंगल को चार साल पहले टाइगर रिजर्व का दर्जा दिया गया था। इसका नतीजा हुआ कि दोनों जंगलों में बाघों की संख्या में इजाफा हुआ। माना जा रहा है कि इस समय दुधवा रेंज में 125 और पीलीभीत टाइगर रिजर्व में 60 से अधिक बाघ रह रहे हैं।



## The Hindu – 06 August, 2018

THE HINDU LUCKNOW  
MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 2018

### 1,125 Indian star tortoises seized from train passengers

They were to be smuggled to Bangladesh, say DRI officials

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
VIZAGHAPATNAM**

In a major haul, 1,125 endangered Indian star tortoises, which were meant to be smuggled to Bangladesh, were seized from three passengers on board a train at the city railway station.

Acting on intelligence inputs, the officials of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Vizag Regional Unit, searched the Yesvantpur-Howrah Express around 4 p.m. on Saturday and found the three passengers with the tortoises stuffed in cloth bags in coach S7, a DRI communiqué said here on Sunday.

The passengers who boarded the train in Vijayawada were travelling to Howrah in West Bengal from where the tortoises were meant to be smuggled to



The species is listed in the Schedule IV of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Bangladesh. During the search, the DRI official found the tortoises of different sizes stuffed in five bags and apprehended the passengers.

The DRI officials roped in forest officials to examine the species. The Divisional Forest Officer of Vizag certified that the species were Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*).

**Categorised 'Vulnerable'**

The species is categorised as 'Vulnerable' in the red list of endangered species of the International Union for Conservation of Nature the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it. The species is listed in the Schedule IV of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and prohibited from export under the Foreign Trade Policy. The species are liable for confiscation under the Customs Act, 1962.

"The three passengers have admitted that they were given the tortoises by a person at Chelur near Balegowdanahalli village in Karnataka," the DRI communiqué said.

## The Pioneer – 13 August, 2018

the pioneer  
LUCKNOW | MONDAY | AUGUST 13, 2018

### Population of Asian elephants dwindling

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW**

On the occasion of World Elephant Day (August 12), an organisation that is running Elephant care centre at Mathura shared the problems faced by the animals today.

Kartick Satyanarayan from the organisation said, "The population of Asian elephants today lies in the hands of conservationists, policy-makers, practitioners and local communities alike. On this day, we hope that the future of our elephants will be bright."

Gera Sebanani from the same organisation said, "The population of Asian elephants over the last ten decades has decreased by 90% and with a population of 23,000-27,000 Asian elephants, India remains their last stronghold. Thus, the survival of this species is critically linked with its survival in India."

One of the most powerful animals, the majestic elephant has always been a symbol of national pride and integral to India's rich culture and heritage. India owes its rich natural wealth to its majestic elephants.

However, the situation for elephants in India is worrisome today. "To meet the requirements of an increasing population and to deliver on its ambitious economic goals, our rich wildlife is slowly being sacrificed and succumbing to



anthropogenic pressures. As a result, the elephants are losing their all — habitats, familial herds and natural instinct," Sebanani said.

One of the 84 identified elephant corridors in India, 21 have railway tracks running through them. "The knowledge of these corridors is passed on between elephants from generations to generations, thus walking through these corridors is a natural instinct for these majestic animals. As the resources in their fragmented pockets become scarcer, these elephants are pushed to cross railway tracks in search for food often to meet their fatal end. It comes as no surprise that between 1987 and 2017, many elephants lost their lives. It would be naïve for us to expect these elephants to stop walking through their historic corridors as we humans continue to invade their rightful space," said a member from the organisation.

"Another major crisis on our hands is human-elephant conflict," he added. As more and more forests are being destroyed to create space for new agricultural lands, it comes as no surprise that incidents of crop-raiding, destruction of property and loss of human lives have escalated. However, such conflicts are avoidable with the help of scientific wildlife tracking techniques and rigorous community engagement and sensitisation.

Poaching for captivity is also a serious threat faced by Asian elephants. "The rich cultural and natural heritage of India attracts a substantial footfall of tourists every year. For most tourists, interaction with elephants tops their bucket-list item and sadly, misinformation often leads them to places where captive elephants are used to lure and extort money from tourists. The sad truth of captivity is that a baby elephant is poached from the wild at a tender age of 2 from its natural habitat and familial herd is cleverly 'blanketed'," he said. Asian elephants are listed as 'endangered' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and protected under Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

The centre is currently providing lifetime care and treatment to over 20 rehabilitated pachyderms, rescued from illegal captivity and situations where they were ill-treated and subjected to cruelty.



## The Pioneer – 26 August, 2018



## The Hindu – 02 September, 2018



## The Hindu – 03 September, 2018

THE HINDU LUCKNOW  
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### NGT steps in to conserve Ghats

Restrains States from activities that may have an adverse impact

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOCCHI**

The six Western Ghats States, including Kerala, have been restrained by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) from giving environmental clearance to activities that may adversely impact the eco-sensitive areas of the mountain ranges.

The panel directed that the extent of Eco-Sensitive Zones of Western Ghats, which was notified by the Central government earlier, should not be reduced in view of the recent floods in Kerala.

The Madhav Gadgil-led Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP) report had created a political furor in the State with most of the political parties and a section of the church opposing it.

The Tribunal Bench, in its order, noted that any alteration in the draft notification

of zones may seriously affect the environment, especially in view of recent incidents in Kerala. It was on a petition filed by the Goa Foundation that the Bench issued the order. The Principal Bench of the panel, which permitted the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF and OC) to re-publish the draft notification on Eco-Sensitive Zones, which expired on August 26, ordered that the matter may be finalised within six months. It also

ordered that the draft of the republished notification be placed on the record of the tribunal.

**Pulled up for delay**  
The Bench was headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel and had Justice S.P. Wangdi, and Nagma Nanda, expert member, as its members.

Pulling up the ghats States for the delay in filing objections regarding the notification, the tribunal observed

that the "delay on account of objections of States may not be conducive to the protection of the eco-sensitive areas" and the matter must be finalised at the earliest.

The WGEEP had earlier proposed "much larger areas for being included in the eco-sensitive zone" though the Kasturirangan High Level Working Group, also appointed by the MoEF and OC to look into the WGEEP report, had reduced it. The Ministry had accepted the Kasturirangan report and issued the draft notifications on ecologically sensitive zones.

The Principal Bench of the tribunal, which noted that the ecology of the Western Ghats region was under serious stress, also highlighted the fact that Western Ghats region was one of the richest biodiversity areas which needed to be conserved.



## The Hindu – 10 September, 2018

 **the pioneer**  
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### Brazilian parrot extinct in wild

**Brasilia:** A new study has found the Brazilian Spix's macaw parrot has become extinct in the wild. The bird achieved onscreen fame as an animated character in the Disney movie "Rio" as a charming parrot named Blu.

The Spix's macaw is one of eight bird species, half of them in Brazil, confirmed extinct or suspected extinct in the report from BirdLife International published on Sunday, reports CNN. But 60 to 80 Spix's macaws still live in captivity.

Deforestation is a leading cause of the Spix's macaw's disappearance from its natural habitat, according to the report.

For the first time, extinctions on the mainland are outpacing those on islands, it said.

"Ninety per cent of bird extinctions in recent centuries have been of species on islands," said Stuart Butchart, BirdLife's chief scientist and the paper's lead author. **IAN S**







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