

# VANA PREMI

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***Whatever we are today is because of our teachers,  
Vana Premi wishes very happy Teachers' Day.***

***This issue is dedicated to all the teachers of our Country***



***Effect of late, erratic and deficit rainfall***

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



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# EDITORIAL

**International Literacy Day:** - September 8 every year is observed as International Literacy Day throughout globe. It was proclaimed International Literacy Day by UNESCO on November 17, 1965 and it was first celebrated in 1966. Its aim is to highlight the importance of literacy for individuals, communities and societies. On International Literacy Day each year, UNESCO reminds the international community of the status of literacy and adult learning globally. Celebrations take place around the world. The day is celebrated having special themes, programs and goals of education all over the world. International literacy day 2014 theme is "Literacy and Sustainable Development."

**Definition of literacy:** -The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has drafted a definition of literacy as the "ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society."

The National Literacy Mission defines literacy as acquiring the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic and the ability to apply them to one's day-to-day life.

Some 775 million adults lack minimum literacy skills; one in five adults is still not literate and two-thirds of them are women; 60.7 million children are out-of-school and many more attend irregularly or drop out.

According to UNESCO's "Global Monitoring Report on Education for All (2006)", South and West Asia has the lowest regional adult literacy rate (58.6%), followed by sub-Saharan Africa (59.7%), and the Arab States (62.7%). Countries with the lowest literacy rates in the world are Burkina Faso (12.8%), Niger (14.4%) and Mali (19%). The report shows a clear connection between illiteracy and countries in severe poverty, and between illiteracy and prejudice against women.

As per 2011 census the overall literacy rate in India is 74.04 and this has grown from 12% at the end of British rule in 1947. The level is well below the world average literacy rate of 84%; Of all nations, India currently has the largest illiterate population despite government programmes. Kerala stands first in literacy, with 93.91% literates followed by Lakshadweep 92.91%, Mizoram 91.58%, Tripura 87.75%, Goa 87.40% and lowest being Bihar with 63.82% respectively. In September 2013, the State Government of Tripura claimed that the state had surpassed Kerala as the most literate state in India, with a literacy rate of 94.65%. Undivided Andhra Pradesh is having 67.66% rate



of literacy and is at 31st among the Indian states. Prior to the British era, education in India commenced under the supervision of a guru in traditional schools called Gurukuls. The Gurukuls were supported by public donation and were one of the earliest forms of public school offices. However these Gurukuls catered only to the Upper castes of the Indian society and the overwhelming masses were denied any formal education.

In the colonial era, the gurukul system began to decline as the system promoted by the British began to gradually take over. Between 1881–82 and 1946–47, the number of English primary schools grew from 82,916 to 134,866 and the number of students in English Schools grew from 2,061,541 to 10,525,943. Literacy rates in accordance to British in India rose from 3.2 per cent in 1881 to 7.2 per cent in 1931 and 12.2 per cent in 1947. Today it is about 74.04 % .

The Sarva Siksha Abhiyan was launched in 2001 to ensure that all children in the 6–14-year age-group attend school and complete eight years of schooling by 2010. An important component of the scheme is the Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education, meant primarily for children in areas with no formal school within a one kilometer radius. The centrally sponsored District Primary Education Programme, launched in 1994, had opened more than 160,000 new schools by 2005, including almost 84,000 alternative

schools.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or Right to Education Act (RTE), is an Act of the Parliament enacted on 4 August 2009, which describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21a of the Indian Constitution applies to even unaided private schools. India became one of the 135 countries to make education a fundamental right of every child when the act came into force on 1 April 2010. This Act was enacted to make India 100 % literate.

Literacy is as important as food for a person to be alive and successful. Literacy is not just about educating, it is a unique and powerful tool to eradicate poverty and a strong means for social and human progress. It is also necessary to eradicate the poverty, lowering the child mortality, controlling the population growth, and attaining gender equality. Literacy has the ability to raise the family status and hence the country status. It is celebrated to encourage the people towards getting continuous education and understand their responsibilities towards the family, society and the country. Celebrating the International Literacy Day is to promote the human attention towards the literacy and know their rights for social and human development. One of the main factors contributing to a relatively low literacy rate is the lack of proper school facilities as well as the sheer inefficiency

of teaching staff across the government run education sector. There is a shortage of classrooms to accommodate all the students. In addition, there is no proper sanitation in most of the schools. 'Free and compulsory education' is the basic literacy instruction dispensed by barely qualified 'para teachers'. The average Pupil Teacher Ratio for All India is 1:42, implying teacher shortage. Such inadequacies resulted in a non-standardized school system where literacy rates may differ. Furthermore, the expenditure allocated to education was very low when compared to requirement. This further complicates the literacy problem in India. Absolute poverty in India has also deterred the pursuit of formal education as education is not deemed the highest priority among the poor as compared to other basic necessities. The large proportion of illiterate females is another reason for the low literacy rate in India. Inequality based on gender differences resulted in female literacy rates being lower.

The table below shows the adult and youth literacy rates for India and some neighboring countries. Adult literacy rate is based on the 15+ year age group; while Youth literacy rate is for

the 15–24 years age group (i.e. youth is a subset of adults).

| County        | Adult Literacy rate | Youth Literacy rate |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| China         | 95.1 %              | 99.6%               |
| Si Lanka      | 90.8%               | 98.0%               |
| Burma         | 89.9%               | 94.4%               |
| World Average | 84.0%               | 89.6%               |
| India         | 74.04               | 81.1%               |

Literacy is a human right, a tool of personal empowerment and a means for social and human development. Educational opportunities depend on literacy. Literacy is at the heart of basic education for all, and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy. There are good reasons why literacy is at the core of Education for All.

Vana Premi wishes that India will achieve 100% literacy very soon. Extreme sensitivity to this issue on the part of the administrative officials who are responsible for implementing numerous Government schemes for the eradication of illiteracy and an acute awareness among the beneficiaries of the fruits of literacy will surely help in realizing this dream. QMK

## NOTICE

**The 73<sup>rd</sup> General Body Meeting and silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Association of Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will be held On 21<sup>st</sup> September 2014 at K.B.R. Park 11-30 A.M. All the members are requested to attend the meeting along with their spouses.**

**Secretary**

# ROLE OF FORESTS IN ENVIRONMENT

By  
**T. Krishna Murthy**

**Introduction:** - Nature is a complex phenomenon and it is difficult to understand its interaction and manifestation. It has created myriad forms. Land water and air have been supporting life-flora and fauna. Biodiversity can be defined as the condition where different species of plants and animals live together depending on each other in the same habitat. Biodiversity is very essential for maintaining the balance of nature or ecological balance. Plants make their own food whereas animals cannot and have to depend on plants for their food. When animals and plants die they are decomposed by bacteria. If we take an example of a simple food chain it is seen that plankton are consumed as food by the crustaceans which in turn are consumed by fish. These fish are consumed by man. Similarly rats feed on grains and in turn are consumed by snakes. The population of snakes is kept under check by eagles. Quite a few plants depend on insects for pollination while insects depend on plants for their nectar. Thus they are interdependent and if there is some break in the chain or one of the organisms is wiped out the other organisms in the chain either proliferate or die affecting the eco-system. If herbivore is withdrawn carnivore depletes. If carnivore is destroyed, herbivore

depletes and become a pest. While this is so, shocking revelations that nature's resources once considered limitless are found to be not that abundant and man has started realizing that the home in which he lived is being mismanaged and the nature's gifts are getting depleted. This is due to tampering with the intricate balance of nature either knowingly or unknowingly. Due to thirst for land and expansion of agriculture for feeding the growing human population, deep in-roads have been made into nature. In the process, forest areas are cleared and deforested. It is true that development of industry and agriculture are necessary for the progress of the nation but it should not be at the cost of other spheres of human activity upsetting the very balance of nature. Every item of creation has its role to play in this ecosystem. But man has treated the earth as his colony and exploited the resources indiscriminately.

**Importance of Water – Management:** - Since water is a precious commodity, efficient management of available water resources is crucial. The total available water in the hydrosphere is estimated at about 1500 million km<sup>3</sup>. Ninety nine per cent of this total water is **contained** in oceans and icecaps as given in



Table 1 Remaining one per cent is the actual available amount of fresh water which requires judicious use.

This tiny fraction of water present in the atmosphere in lakes, streams, soils and beneath is of great importance for economic industrial and agricultural development.

**Table 1**

Water storage in the hydrosphere

| Storage                                                        | Volume(000 km3) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Average stream channels                                        | 1               |
| Vapour and clouds in atmosphere                                | 13              |
| Soil water above water table                                   | 67              |
| Saline lakes and inland seas                                   | 104             |
| Fresh water lakes                                              | 125             |
| Ground water<br>(50% less than 800 m below<br>Earth's surface) | 8300            |
| Icecaps and glaciers                                           | 1370000         |
| <b>Total</b>                                                   | <b>1407810</b>  |

If this nature's gift of available water is mismanaged the very existence of the biosphere will be in jeopardy.

Now the major effort of our water management policy should be to tap the maximum of these resources available over our land mass. It may be desirable to assess the land use pattern of the country and then to assess the precipitation received over different land use areas.

**Table 2**

Land utilization in India

| Land use                            | Area (million Ha) | % of the total |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Agricultural                        |                   |                |
| Cultivated land                     | 152.6             | 46.4           |
| Forests                             | 75.0              | 22.8           |
| Other uncultivated<br>land          | 42.3              | 12.9           |
| Land under non-<br>agricultural use | 16.2              | 4.9            |
| Barren and Unc-<br>cultivable land  | 42.7              | 13.0           |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>328.8</b>      | <b>100.0</b>   |

It is seen that agriculture occupies the largest area that is 152.6 million ha and next is forest occupying 75 million ha in our country. The average annual precipitation received over our land is 400 million ha meters and the forest receives and processes 91.2 ha m of the rainfall.

**Role of Forests in Water Management and Soil Conservation:**

- Forests have been ruthlessly cut down for man's self-aggrandizement, felling trees in the river catchment is resulting in floods which have been ravaging our country. Both floods and droughts occur very regularly. In India 85% of the land is drought prone receiving less than 750 mm of annual rainfall. The impact of drought leads to shortage of fodder, drinking water, loss in agricultural production and a general decline in living standards. The damage

due to floods can be reduced by reducing the run-off and soil erosion and by increasing percolation of water into soil. When top soil is washed away exposing the lower hard soil surface, the rain water does not percolate resulting in floods and water table going down. Drought is both man-made and environment induced. Man has played a key role in the creation of drought prone areas due to his over exploitation of natural resources like forests, degradation of grazing lands, excessive utilization of ground water, silting of tanks.

In the past luxuriant forests existed in Rajasthan. Our history tells us that armies of Alexander had taken shelter in these forests. But now devastation of forests has converted the land into desert and it is almost difficult to retrieve the conditions. In the *Mahabharata* the land around Mathura was considered as land of honey and milk because of abundant tree growth, foods and fodder and bracing climate but now the conditions have completely changed and desert conditions are prevailing. It is estimated that desert is spreading at the rate of one km per annum and the sand particles are getting deposited in the fertile fields making them unproductive. It is generally thought that Himalayan ranges are thickly wooded and contain luxuriant growth of forests but man, in his greed to extend cultivation of potatoes and paddy even on steep hill slopes, has cut down the forests with the consequent result of heavy soil erosion and floods to the misery of the

people living in the plains. This hill tops have become bald owing to removal of vegetation and hence have remained unproductive. Even the present Sahara desert once contained abundant forests. In fact Roman history tells us that Hannibal used to collect his war Elephants from these forests. This clearly shows that any step to upset the eco-system would adversely affect mankind itself. Shifting cultivation by tribals is resulting in enormous loss of forest wealth and creating ecological problems. Fortunately India has a variety of climatic and edaphic conditions. In our country we have rainfall zones of 752000 cms. as in Eastern Himalayas and Western Ghats and very low rainfall areas as in Barmer and Jaisalmer in Rajasthan where the rainfall is about 18 to 25 cm. But most part of the country has moderate rainfall. We have very hot places as in central and South India and also snow-clad mountains in the Himalayas. The edaphic conditions also vary. We have black cotton, sandy to sandy loam, lateritic soils etc. Naturally with such a diversity of climatic and edaphic conditions the flora and fauna in our country is very rich supporting a variety of forest species. It is seen that we have about 17,000 plant species in our country. We have Alpine forests in the higher reaches of Western Himalayas, the evergreen forests in the Eastern Himalayas and Western Ghats. The deciduous forests exist in greater part of the country. Where the rainfall is low scrub type of forests exist. The forest area of India is 74.5 or

75 million ha as against 328.8 or say 329 million ha of land area which works out of 22.8% of the total land area. Of the total land area, 266 million ha is available for potential use. But in reality land has been subjected to varying degrees of degradation and a total of 42.7 million ha has been identified as uncultivable / waste land by National Wasteland Development Board. The reasons for degradation of land are water and wind erosion, salinity and alkalinity of soil, water logging, shifting cultivation and other defective methods of land use. 5-7 million hectares of cultivated land is destroyed every year due to one reason or the other all over the world.

The tropical forests were destroyed at an annual rate of 15.4 million ha between 1980 and 1990 according to a recent FAO survey. The causes of deforestation vary from region to region. Loss of vegetal cover has made land more susceptible to erosion. Wind and water erosion have left vast tracts of land barren. According to Dr. M.S. Swaminathan about 6000 million tons of top soil are washed or blown away annually in our country. This loss reflects on our overall productivity including that of food grains. If we evaluate this loss in terms of nutrients NPK loss it may amount to Rs. 12,000 million annually. Out of this nearly 10% of this soil is being deposited in our multipurpose reservoirs thus reducing their storage capacity by 1-2% per year. About 29% of this eroded soil is being permanently lost into the sea. The loss of top

soil represents a permanent depletion of the resource base. As per N.R.S.A. hardly about 14.1% of the total land area is really said to be under vegetative cover. With enormous bovine population of 450 million there is adverse impact on the fodder resources in the country. Due to lack of green agricultural fodder the cattle are driven to forests for grazing resulting in the depletion of vegetal cover in the forests, making the soils compact preventing vegetation from coming up. Over grazing in vegetal deficit areas, leads to land degradation and desert like conditions which in turn reduce animal productivity and have adverse effect on people who live on cattle rearing for their sustenance. National Forest Policy of India laid down in 1952 that 1/3 of the land area should be under forest but unfortunately this figure has never been achieved. On the contrary during the last four decades we have lost about 5 million ha of forest area for various purposes like agriculture, roads, industries, irrigation projects, canal system, transmission lines etc. If the forest falls below 10% of the land area particularly like in India which is a tropical country the whole eco-system is upset and the resultant conditions become irretrievable. Thus the forests are required for the very existence of mankind.

With enormous human population of over 900 million there is considerable pressure on the forest in our country for conversion of land for

cultivation, industrial purpose and other developmental activities. The per capita forest in our country 0.109 ha as against world's average of 1.0 ha. Our country is classified as forest deficit Zone.

### **The "Bounty" from Forest**

**Direct benefits:** - Nature is bountiful and we derive a variety of benefits both direct and indirect. The forests yield timber, firewood, bamboo and various non-wood forest produce. The total growing-stock of the country's forest is 1997 million m<sup>3</sup>. The annual increment of the forest is also very low which is hardly 1% of the, growing stock. The requirement of timber in our country is 35 million m<sup>3</sup> and 202 million m<sup>3</sup> of energy-wood. The projected demand of timber and fuel-wood in 2000 A.D. would increase to 64 million m<sup>3</sup> and 225 million m<sup>3</sup> of fuel-wood. But considering the per capita requirement of 25 kg or wood, the requirement of forest produce is enormous which our forests can hardly meet. The timber is used for a variety of purposes constructional, furniture, plywood, agricultural implements, packing cases, match industry, saw milling, boat and ship building, railways, paneling, pencil and frame industry. Wood is used for producing energy for cooking purposes. Consumption of energy from firewood in rural area is 68.5% and in urban area it is 45.5% of the total energy consumed for domestic use. There is a large demand for energy source from forests. Thus wood is used virtually from cradle to coffin. Half of the fuel-wood is used for industrial

consumption viz. cellulose and paper, rayon, plywood, particle board industry etc. The forests also yield several other produce which are known as non-wood or minor forest products. Man used plants to cure ailments and to relieve pain, fruits, seeds, leaves to relieve hunger, essential oils, gums, resins, oleoresins, fatty oils, tanning materials, natural organic coloring materials, Katha and Kutch, oxalic acid, fibers and flosses, beverages, narcotics fodder and forage plants, saponins, fish poisons, insecticides and raticides, green manure, beads, rubber plants, baskets and wicker-work, cane, beedi-leaf and miscellaneous including thatching and broom materials and animal products to meet other needs. Many of them are economically very important and also find place in export trade. Bamboo is used by a considerable proportion of the people for making baskets etc. Forests provide employment to tens of thousands of people in various management and silvicultural operations, raising plantations, harvesting, collection, processing at site and factories, marketing etc. Beedi-leaf collection in certain parts of the country is a boon to the weaker sections in summer season when no other avocation is available besides earning considerable revenue to the Government. Quite a few products find place in external trade earning foreign exchange. These are only few among many of the products which are of great economic importance. - To be continued - This was first published in "Indian Forester" of January 1999 issue.



# A NEW APPROACH TO FOREST MANAGEMENT

By  
**S. D. Mukherji**

The forest officers are entrusted with the task of protecting and developing the forests. Unfortunately, with the changing demography, increasing smuggling, poaching and encroachments on forestland, the forests are rapidly degrading. The protection staff is meager in number and ill equipped to face the organized gangs indulging in forest destruction. The extreme poverty among the people living in remote forest fringe regions coupled with meager employment opportunities has forced the use of forest beyond its carrying capacity leading to degradation of forest. Joint Forest Management (JFM) was introduced to take the support of the forest fringe villagers in the protection and development of forest while providing gainful employment to the people. After ages of neglect the forest dwellers were pleasantly surprised and gave their whole hearted support to forest protection and development wherever the forest officers were sincere and honest. However, failure of the forest department to continue the programme by keeping the people engaged and provide regular employment failed to sustain their interest. Today forest department is facing a

situation where the people successfully implementing JFM have also started encroachment on the forestland that was once protected and regenerated with their cooperation. This is a dangerous turn that needs to be tackled with a thoughtful initiative and urgency.

It must be understood that the first priority for every person is to have a secured livelihood and more so for the people with uncertainty of two square meal a day to survive. Unfortunately, most of the extreme poor people falling in this category form a sizeable percentage of forest dwellers living in forest fringe villages. Therefore, providing livelihood security to these families should be the priority of the government. The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, in short FRA generated a new hope of survival among the people surviving on forestland. It recognized individual rights of the tribal and other forest dwellers on the forestland under their possession as on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and community rights over the forests traditionally enjoyed. This was a step to undo the "historic injustice" to the tribal and

other forest dwellers and assert their rights over the forestland over which they were traditionally dependent. However, the people who were law abiding and worked hard to regenerate the degraded forests found them out of this benefit. On the other hand those who encroached upon the forestlands and refused to come into the fold of JFM were benefited by securing the land rights on such forestlands. The implementation of FRA, therefore, did injustice to the law abiding people while benefiting the encroachers. The people indulging in the encroachment of forestland are hopeful that in the near future these encroachments would be regularized. The government, therefore, must send a clear signal that it is prepared to tackle the livelihood problems of the forest dwellers but there is absolutely no chance to allow encroachments on forestlands. It is the duty of the political masters to make it clear to the people about the sincerity of the government to have no compromise on the protection of forest. Without a strong political will it may not be possible for the forest department to stop the encroachments on forestland and protect the forest.

It should be made clear that forest alone cannot provide livelihood security to forest dependent communities. It is necessary to ensure that forest fringe villages receive all benefits intended for them under various programmes of the

government in order to improve their living condition. However, the poor delivery of the government programmes in the remote forest fringe villages has failed to improve the livelihood of the forest dependent communities. In absence of adequate source of income the people are compelled to use the forest for short term gain while losing the long term benefits from the forests. Poverty is seen as the biggest enemy of the forest. Therefore, along with regular engagement of the people in forest development- giving much needed employment and wage income- the delivery system of the poverty alleviation programmes of the government must be improved to assure sustained livelihood to the forest dwellers. It has been recognized by the government that the prevailing unlawful condition in remote forested region of the country, generally known as naxalite problem, has prospered due to poor development of the remote forest fringe villages. It has left the poor people untouched since independence in spite of huge development funds provided by the government. It is witnessed that innocent people- including security personal and, sometimes, politicians- are losing their life in the hands of naxalite that do not want the government presence to disturb their hegemony in the remote forest regions of the country. The recent successful election in these

remote naxalite affected regions, where people have voted ignoring threat to their lives, has proved that people are looking for a government that would come to their rescue. It is, therefore, necessary to find some way to develop these forest fringe villages and give livelihood security to the forest dwellers.

Since the forest officers are the only government representatives visiting the forest fringe villages regularly as a part of their official assignment, it would be appropriate to use their services in development of the forest fringe villages. No government service is worth its existence if it does not support the poor and the deprived people for a better life. Forest can surely support the livelihood of the forest dwellers but only to a limited extent. Successful implementation of all government programmes is the key for a secured livelihood to the forest dwellers. Since it has been proved that other developmental departments are unable to reach the remote areas on regular basis, there is urgency to find an alternative solution. Forest officers, therefore, may be entrusted with the additional responsibility to monitor the implementation of all poverty alleviation and developmental programmes of the government in the forest fringe villages. The welfare of the forest dependent communities should be an integral part of the forest management. The scope of the JFM, therefore, should be enhanced to cover the

welfare programmes of the government to ensure sustained livelihood to the forest fringe villages. This change in the responsibility of the forest officers has to be mandated by the government so that other departments do not look at it as interference in their domain. While holding village meetings, the forest officers must review and verify the delivery of all other government programmes to the intended beneficiaries. The reviews should be recoded and informed to the district administration and the concerned district officers for their information and necessary action. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest should be kept informed so that he can keep the concerned departments and the government informed of the status of implementation of the programmes to take appropriate action for timely delivery of the intended benefits to the people.

Once the villagers understand that they can approach the forest officers with their grievances and get them resolved it will make their life better as today they have to travel long distances to meet the district officials to vent their problems spending the scarce money and time with no surety of its solution. Since poverty is the greatest enemy of the forest, removal of poverty will ensure protection and development of forest. People will have immense faith on the forest officers and give

full support to keep away the people indulging in forest destruction. It may not be out of place to put on record that today forest officers are working in various government departments on deputation and discharging their duty to the satisfaction of the government. Therefore, there may not be any doubt on the capability of the forest officers in discharging this additional responsibility. It will enhance the status of the forest service and make it politically relevant as people's welfare would be a part of their duty. It is well known that continuous stretch of forests is necessary for the movement of wildlife and its safety. However, with the grant of *pattas* and encroachments on forestlands scattered habitations have come up inside the forests, breaking the continuity of the forests. Most of the scattered holdings are not properly demarcated on the ground making it difficult to identify and separate it from the forestland under the control of the forest department. This is leading to conflict between the interest of the people and protection of forest. Moreover, the poor people living in such habitations are deprived of proper communication and other

facilities - safe drinking water, schools, medical assistance, market, etc. - to lead a better life. Providing government facilities to such scattered habitation is a difficult proposition. Creation of such facilities inside the forest would further harm the forest. It is, therefore, necessary to consolidate the fragmented land holdings by bringing the people on the fringes of the forests where all government facilities would be extended to the poor people for a sustainable livelihood. The land given to the people can be well demarcated for its development. The people may not object shifting to forest fringe areas provided they are given the equivalent land with better facilities and assured benefits of the government developmental programmes. Forest officers would be able to convince the people living in scattered habitation once they have proved their role in successful delivery of the developmental programmes of the government. This will improve the forest protection and provide continuous stretch of forest for the wildlife to roam and grow to its past glory.

***With trust even silence is understood.  
Without trust every world is misunderstood.  
Trust is the soul of relationship***

# GAMES AND SPORTS IN FOREST DEPARTMENT

By  
**ONKAR SINGH**

*"Mens sana in corpore sano"* a saying in Latin means "a sound mind in a sound body". It has been motivating mankind for generations. Belief in this concept has inspired human race to start major sports events like Olympics and Asian Games.

Andhra Pradesh Forest Department has been first among state Forest departments to start State Level Sports meet for its personnel in 1984. Physical training and sports activities has been compulsory in the initial service periods at all executive levels of IFS, SFS, FRO's, Foresters and F.G's at respective training institute duly emphasizing role of physical fitness in forest departments. At the end of the trainings, sports meets are held to assess and recognize sports talent among the trainees. However, there was no opportunity for sports after training periods. Thus, it was a welcome step by A.P forest department to initiate sports meet for its employees. Keeping in view success of AP forest department, MOEF, Government of India agreed and organized 1st All India Forest Sports meet (AIFSM) at Hyderabad in 1992. Dr. K. Keshava Reddy, IFS, then Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, AP and Sri R. Rajamani, IAS, then Union Environment and forest Secretary who was also

Andhra Pradesh cadre officer played an important role in starting sports meet at All India Level. Subsequently, these sports meets are being held annually in consultation with MOEF, GOI by rotation in different states and FRI Institute, Dehradun. So far 20 editions of AIFSM has been held in 16 states (twice in Haryana and M.P.) and twice at FRI Dehradun.

Andhra Pradesh performance in these sports meets has been fairly good. It stood first in overall medal tally in 1st AIFSM and remains in top 5 states in sports meets. However, due to other states focusing more and recruiting youngsters with sports background lead was taken by them. However, traditional forest bearing states like M.P., T.N., Kerala, Karnataka and Chhattisgarh have been performing well although. In the last sports meet (20th) held at Panchkula in Feb 2013, A.P. stood 12th in overall medal tally among 36 participating teams. Most of its medals came in veteran and Sr. veteran categories Smt. D. V. Padmavathi Sr. Assistant in P.C.C.F office, A.P. has been outstanding sportsperson winning maximum medals for A.P. and best sportswomen in veteran category. Late Sri Sudhakar Reddy, DCF who has been flag bearer for A.P. team in many sports meets also



won medals in weightlifting events. Occasionally, I also won medals in shot put event.

Ever since these games and sports meets started, there have been various groups in the government and forest department questioning the relevancy and usefulness of these events. However, in view of changed scenario and particularly adoption of policy of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization in 1992 by Government of India (GOI), promotion of games and sports in the forest department proved to timely and for better. It not only gave opportunity to all rank holders in the forest department from Forest Guard to P.C.C.F level to compete in the field but also changed their outlook towards each other for better. Moreover, officials and participants from different state forest departments got opportunity to share their views on functioning of the departments and also learn new initiatives taken up by different states. It opened tremendous potential for using this event for conservation and development of the forests and natural resources.

Forest sports meets at state level and All India level not only have potential to upscale the physical fitness and proficiency among forest personnel's but also test the organizing capability, cooperation tendencies, true sportsmanship qualities and develop unity and integrity among the participants. Cultural and quiz events should invariably be included in these sports meets to give color and vibrancy.

Ministry of Environment and Forest, GOI can chalk out right strategy to make these sports meets more purposeful.

There has been adhocism in number of events open for competition as hosting state depending on facilities available and convenience keep on changing/restricting events which sometimes led to help a particular state in getting more medals and improve in their standing among states. This requires a detailed look into schedule of events and once finalized by a committee involving GOI should not be changed. Arbitrariness of any kind by anyone in these sports meet should not be allowed. Rules of the games should be followed meticulously.

As in the west, in India also over last two decades commercial value of the sports has been recognized. This has led to malpractices and unethical means in sports which is cause of concern. There is need to check on this trend. Although, amount spent on conducting of these sports is comparatively low, it is better to get it audited to maintain transparency and fairness. Monitoring and evaluation should be done by independent agency with suggestions for all round improvement to achieve the objectives. It is better to conduct these sports meets in alternate years with a view to improve the quality of these sports meets. In MOEF, GOI a nodal officer should be identified who should overlook and coordinate these meets and also compare the standards and quality of the sports meets held by different host states.

# QADR-E-NI'MAT: BA'D-E-ZAWAAL"

("WORTH & VALUE OF GRACIOUSNESS & FAVOR: REALIZED ONLY  
SUBSEQUENT TO ITS DECLINE OR FADING")

By

**Dr. B. Raghotham Rao Desai.**

When our taps run dry, when water bodies like bore-wells/wells, ponds/tanks, springs/ reservoirs, streams/ rivulets/rivers go dry or when the agricultural fields lie parched crying for water, we realize the inestimable value of water!

Water is wealth——nay water is life itself. Barring air, it is the one commodity which cannot be dispensed with. Being the sustainer of all forms of life on this planet——plant, animal and human——demand on this precious but limited natural resource is ever increasing. We are only too well aware of one fact which we experience quite often in our lives: we appreciate the value of good health only when we fall sick, or the value & importance of a limb when we lose it!

When it comes to the statistical facts and figures, in-so-far-as our country——particularly the Deccan plateau——is concerned, the scenario of availability of water is indeed frightening: while its geographical area is just 2% of the globe, population is well over 16% and water resources scale down to only 4%. It is therefore imperative and incumbent on us to spread message first to the seriousness of the problem and then take appropriate steps next, to adopt

and practice sound water-management-techniques, to ensure availability of water for multiple uses.

While reviewing the impact of seasonal changes, the India Meteorological Department, with inputs from IISc (Centre for Ecological Sciences) was grappled with fears of deficit monsoon and we had another year in that category, with several parts remaining parched. The **El Nino** effect has clearly overpowered the natural onset and movement of the monsoon this year: the monsoons have so far been just a trickle. I may even add that they have been more fickle than usual ——currently 24% below the Long Period Average (LPA), which is worse than the deficiency seen in fiscals 2009 or 2012; while 2009 turned out to be a drought year, rains recovered sharply in the latter half of the season in 2012(according to Crisil Research). What does all this portent to? There having no other source for water except rains and melted snow, people in general seem to be blissfully unaware about the urgent necessity to exercise maximum economy in its usage. Water is just like any other industrial product——it costs humongous amount of money to make it

available from the source to the doorstep of the user, but it cannot be helped, as domestic water needs have got to receive priority over others. We cannot ignore the fact that as an inevitable requirement, we have to make provisions of huge quantities of water for agricultural purposes. While per capita water requirement, for domestic use is 50-60 M<sup>3</sup> p.a., the requirement, for raising crops in a ha. is 150-200 times that figure or even more, depending upon the type of crop—of great concern, however, being no economy worth the name is observed while usage of surface waters is concerned: since irrigation water is charged on crop-area basis, the irrigator is allowed to use freely as much water as he wants without let or hindrance! And under the mistaken notion that 'more is better' he floods the cropped area with water. This is not only very uneconomical usage, but also turns out to be injurious to the health of that crop and the soil. If economy in water use has to be ensured, it should be metered and charged on the basis of consumed quantities——60% or even more of the costly stored water is being lost in transmission from the reservoir to the farm: Instead of spreading water to the cropped area, drip-irrigation should be introduced wherein water is supplied by drips to the crops at the root-zone——it also ensures better productivity, and maintenance of the health of the soil.

When such a suggestion is mooted, someone may point out, naturally, that these measures would entail huge outlays——particularly the local politicians who clamor to attract glamour to undertake newer and newer big projects, diversifying meagre resources! Instead, by implementing several measures as outlined above, the performance levels of the existing projects should be raised which give rich dividends in a very short time. Further, building of a series of inexpensive check-dams would help recharge the groundwater reserves and raise the water-table, as depletion of underground-water-resources is a matter of huge concern.

We did come across an idea of interlinking most of our Himalayan and Peninsular rivers. Perhaps it may not be that viable a solution as suggested, since water also happens to be a highly politicized subject in the Subcontinent without any doubt and India is widely seen as a 'problem State' by its neighboring countries, in terms of sharing waters of The Sindhu (Indus), The Ganga (Ganges), and The Brahmaputra (Tsangpo) rivers and their tributaries. While India views its river-tampering as an internal matter, it is a cause for serious hydrological discomfort in neighboring countries, which receive 80-90 % of water in their rivers from India.

Water-Treaties on sharing waters bilaterally of The Indus, The Ganges, and The Kosi rivers,

though, have stood the test of the times, but have, of late, come under criticism as the treaties on river-water-sharing drawn during sixties of the preceding century (to accommodate the needs of the then 45 crores of population) may not hold enough water for the growing needs of 168 crore people today. And the region is projected to add another 5 crores in next three decades!

We cannot grossly overlook the fact of causing collateral damage to the lower riparian countries by making short-term promises of populist measures like river-linking, for obvious reasons. We should comprehensively look at the cross-section of opinions and prospective of two of the most complex river-systems in the Subcontinent——the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin (which is home to some 63 crore people), and the Indus river basin (which is home to an estimated 30 crore people). The respondents are unanimous that the region is facing acute water shortage because of rising demand, which will surely be escalating in future. The idea of economic co-operation in the region is certainly going to water-down the proposal of interlinking of rivers, as economy-growth too demands investment for resource-extraction and infrastructure-development, since the fact remains that water-scarcity is perhaps one of the biggest risks for investors, since it is fraught with serious apprehensions in the region. There is an

urgent need for comprehensive regional understanding on sharing water sources in view of the rising demand on one hand, and uncertainty of climate-change in sustaining flows in the rivers on the other.

Water being a priceless commodity, there is no wonder if future wars are fought on the question of water, having seen in our own Country how bitter and strained the relations are between several riparian states over the question of sharing of river waters! Managing water is indeed an urgent and imperative need. Rightly a day is being observed all over the world every year as “World Water Day” (at the commencement of 4<sup>th</sup> week of March) for the last two decades and more——since 1993, to be precise——a year after the passing of that momentous resolution by the UN at the conference on Environment and Development at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. An Arabic ‘Quotable Quote’ appears to be so apt (duly transliterated and also provided with a translated version below it), as caption to this write-up!!

(Not consciously but strangely & inadvertently, in retrospect, you find each paragraph interestingly commencing with the same alphabet ‘W’: perhaps since the word Water also has the alphabet ‘W’ as its first letter——a sort of alliteration indeed!)

# MY SERVICE IN TTD –WITH THE BLESSINGS OF LORD - A MEMOIR – (2)

By  
V. Santhaseela babu

**Allotment of TTD Quarters:** As soon as I joined in TTD, I stayed in a rented accommodation at Tirupati. There was a facility for the Officers with headquarters at Tirumala to stay at Tirupati and discharge their duties at Tirumala. Such of those officers who were residing at Tirupati were provided with a Cottage at Tirumala on a nominal monthly rent basis. So I applied to the Joint Executive Officer to allot a Cottage for me at Tirumala for my stay. Till then Cottages were being allotted to the officers in different places at Tirumala. During one of the coordination meetings I suggested to the Executive Officer to see that all the Officers who opt to stay in the cottages are allotted their cottages at one place where there is not much of a demand for cottages from the pilgrims. Then it was decided that the cottages could be allotted in Garudadri Nagar which is at the entrance of Tirumala where the demand, for allotment of cottages, from the pilgrims is minimal due to the distance from the Temple.

Then first I was allotted a full cottage (A&B) portions in Garudadri Nagar (GNC) area on a nominal monthly rent of Rs. 60/- per month and other Officers like Executive Engineers – I and V, Dy. Executive Officers, Medical Officers working in Aswini Hospital, Tirumala followed me to the area. I got the area around my cottage fenced

and got a beautiful garden developed around my cottage with beautiful flowering and ornamental plants. I was staying at Tirumala throughout the week and was going to Tirupati in the evening of Saturday and was coming back in the morning of Monday.

I came to know that the Public Relations Officer, TTD who was occupying the Senior Officers' Quarters of TTD, at Tirupati has constructed his own house and was shifting in to it shortly. Then I went to the Joint Executive Officer with a requisition to allot me a TTD Quarter. Then he enquired the Estate Officer about the vacancy position for which the Estate Officer said there was no vacant quarter available at that time. Then I told the J.E.O. about the vacation of the quarters by the P.R.O. shortly. Then the JEO endorsed on my letter to allot me the Senior Officers' quarters occupied by the P.R.O, as soon as he vacates, and I received the orders as such. After the vacation of the quarters by the P.R.O, I have occupied the quarters. It was the first time that a DFO was allotted a Senior Officers' quarters at Tirupati by TTD.

**Planting in TTD Forests Difficult areas:** - The implementation of, Bio-aesthetic Plan authored by Sri. K. Rajasekhar, IFS; for beautification of Tirumala hills has started off from the year 1980. As such majority of all the easily accessible



areas have been tackled by the previous officers and by the time we joined during 1986, we had some tough hilly areas left which were to be tackled. One of such areas was Vaikunta Theertha Vanam (Kakula Konda). (This area was in the news during the last fire season where the fires have ravaged and took a heavy toll of the forests). This area was in Gogarbham Range and Sri. K. Prabhu Prasad was the Range Officer executing the works there.

Raising of plantation with Misc. species was proposed there. It was a steep hill wherein a jeepable track existed, in the middle of the slope. For clearing the growth, alignment and staking and pitting the labor were to go downhill side and also climb uphill side from the central track. The Range Officer was not able to get the Petty Contractors for execution of these difficult works. Mainly the internal transport of the plants to the planting points was a herculean task and nobody came forward to take up this work. The FRO discussed these problems with me and expressed the difficulty in execution of work here. I discussed the matter with my Conservator of Forests Sri. Janakiram Naidu *garu* and the CF was pleased to ask me to get the data collected and the proposal for sanction of the appropriate rate is submitted. Accordingly the data was collected by Sri Prabhu Prasad which I checked personally and submitted the proposal for sanction of enhanced rates. The CF has readily sanctioned the rates and thereafter the work was executed and completed in time. Sri Prabhu Prasad had put in excellent efforts in raising this

plantation taking it as a challenge. Similarly we had executed the work of planting of seedlings on Narayanagiri Hill and other difficult terrains. All the plantations were successful and whenever I visit Tirumala my heart bounces with joy on seeing the plantations raised. But recently after seeing the news in Televisions and reading newspapers about the extensive fire damage caused on Tirumala Hills, I spent so many sleepless nights pondering over the incidents.

**Processing of Cash Accounts:** During the tenure of Sri. K. Rajasekhar, IFS; as Conservator of Forests, the system of pre-audit of Accounts was adopted by the TTD Forest Wing. The Range Officers were not being issued with any cheques towards A.R. Advances. Initially the works were being got executed through the Petty Contractors and the Section Officers were recording the measurements which were check measured by the Range Officers and the DFOs. The Vouchers were prepared and submitted by the Range Officers to the Accounts Wing of TTD through the office of the Conservator of Forests after a preliminary scrutiny in CF's Office and issue of Sanction of Expenditure Proceedings. The Audit Officers in the Accounts wing were examining and passing the Bills after due scrutiny with reference to the Administrative and Technical Sanctions, verification of M. Books, Vouchers and the Agreement Forms. Then the Chief Accounts Officer was issuing the cheques. This system was quite ideal and there was no scope for any

excess or irregular booking of expenditure and there were no advances outstanding with the Range Officers for recovery by way of work done. It was so happening that my Range Officers, after preparing the Vouchers and necessary records, were going frequently to Tirupati for getting the preliminary scrutiny of Vouchers done in CF's office and it was consuming a considerable time for the scrutiny as the CF office staff were to go through the vouchers of all the Ranges of both Tirupati and Tirumala Divisions and work was suffering in my Division. I brought this to the notice of my Conservator of Forests and I requested the CF to allot certain Budget to Tirumala Division and permit me to accord Sanction of Expenditure after getting the Accounts scrutinized in my Office itself as I had one Grade –I Draughtsman and an UD Accountant in my Office. The CF readily agreed for my proposal and permitted me to go ahead by allotting the required Budget to my Division. With this, my Range Officers were saved of the wastage of time and all of them felt comfortable.

**Fire Fighting Operations in the Forests:** As I stated in the earlier paragraph about the ravaging fires that swept Tirumala Forests, during our period also there were fire occurrences in the Forests but we were very much alert and immediately swinging in to action to put off the fires. An article "Fire Fighting in TTD Forests" written by me about the occurrence of fires and the measures taken by us to put off the fires was published in October- 2012 issue of Vana Premi. I shall mention some of the salient points from

that article for the information of those readers who did not have the opportunity to go through the same.

TTD Forest area comprises of the entire TTD Enclosure which is 10.33 Sq. Miles (26.75 sq. km) of area. The Forest area was divided in to 32 *Vanams* which were named after great sages like *Athri, Narada, Viswamithra, Bhruugu, Bharadwaja, Ramanujacharya, Sankaracharya, Madhwacharya, Jamadagni, Vedavyasa, Suka, Gauthama, Prahallada, Dhruva* and so on. Fire tracing operations were regularly carried out well in advance of the fire season. Numerous fire lines were designed in the entire Forest area of TTD and the Reserved Forests adjacent and they were being cleared every year in time to minimize the spreading of fire. Six observation points have been set up at elevated vantage points, from where maximum area was visible, with sufficient man power on shift duties both during the day and night. The persons posted at the observation points were equipped with walkie-talkie wireless sets and they were alerting the ground parties as soon as a fire occurrence was sighted by them. Fire Fighting Squads each consisting of 10 persons during the day time and 10 persons during night time, equipped with one Jeep and a Mobile wireless set fixed in the Jeep were stationed at the selected points with one Forest Security Guard to head each party. As soon as a fire occurrence message was transmitted, the nearest party was proceeding to the spot in the Jeep and in case of necessity they were requisitioning the

services of other parties also through wireless sets. I had also mentioned in my article about the death of one NMR labor while fighting the fire in the Forest.

### **Salvaging of the Bodies of Papavinasam**

**Flood Victims:** A very unhappy incident akin to that of the recent Beas river tragedy, (wherein certain students of our state were washed away due to lifting of flood gates of the Dam) has occurred at Tirumala, in the downstream of Papavinasam Dam. In my article "Search Operation" published in Vana Premi Issue of June – 2010, I had narrated about the incident in detail. The gist of the incident was that Papavinasam Dam at Tirumala received heavy inflow of water during the incessant rains in the area and the authorities have opened the crest gates of the Dam after following the due procedure of announcing the fact through mikes etc. But unfortunately some four people from Maharashtra who were taking bath and washing their clothes in the downstream of Papavinasam Dam at a distance from the main Dam were drowned and washed away in the water and while drifting in the water one person could catch hold of a tree and with great difficulty he could reach the bank of the stream and came to Tirumala and informed the TTD authorities about the incident.

Immediately the Joint Executive Officer Sri N. Ramesh Kumar, IAS; called me and requested me to take necessary action to trace out the victims. With the help of my Range Officers and staff we conducted search operations in the downstream

of Papavinasam Dam for two days and could trace out the 3 bodies of the victims and bring them to Tirumala. In recognition of the services rendered by the staff, I got Cash Rewards sanctioned by the Executive Officer, TTD to all the staff involved in this operation for the first time in TTD.

### **Protection and Control of Cattle and Head loads of Firewood:**

Since the year 1971, I had acquaintance with Tirupati and Tirumala Hills when I started my career as Forest Range Officer in Pre- Investment Survey of Forest Resources, Tirupati. In those days majority of the people in Tirupati Town were depending on the firewood that was being illicitly brought from the forests around Tirupati and Tirumala hills. As a result, there used to be a caravan of firewood head loads (as Sri.T.V. Ranga Rajan IFS; the then DFO, Chittoor East Division had named it while pulling up the Forest Range Officer, Tirupati for his laxity in controlling the menace) at the outskirts of Tirupati. The linear belt of the RF area between Kapila Theertham and Alipiri was totally infested by goat browsing. Such was the pathetic situation of Forests at that time. Since the advent of Bio-aesthetic Plan, written and implemented by Sri. K. Rajasekhar, IFS; the situation started improving as efforts were on to curb the menace of firewood head loads and goat browsing and grazing of cattle not only in the TTD Forest areas but also in the adjoining RFs.

Two Special Forest Squads, one in Tirupati Division and the other in Tirumala Division, were

formed with the Forest Security Guards and NMR *Maistries* and labor of TTD on shift duties, who were provided with Jeeps with double Drivers to run the vehicles round the clock. These Squads were continuously perambulating the vulnerable Forest areas and the routes of illicit transport and were booking the cases. The fine collected for each head load of firewood was Rs. 100/- besides its confiscation. Each head of Cattle that was found straying in to the TTD Forest area was impounded and a fee of Rs. 200/- per head of cattle was levied as a fine. Since the Executive Officer, TTD was the E.O, Tirumala Panchayath, the above heavy fine amounts were got fixed by the E.O. and were implemented. Due to the above stringent measures taken and implemented by the TTD Forest Department the head load menace, grazing by the cattle and goat browsing menace had come down to the lowest. In all coordination meeting that was being conducted by the Executive Officer every Friday, the progress of booking of head loads and impounding of the cattle was reviewed by the E.O. That was the importance given by the TTD regarding protection and conserving the Forest wealth.

**Construction of a Permanent building for DFO's Office at Tirumala:** During one of the coordination meetings held by the Executive Officer, TTD, I brought to notice of the E.O. about functioning of the office of the DFO, TTD at Tirumala in 3 cottages and suggested to explore the possibility of construction of a permanent building for the office of the DFO at Tirumala so

that 3 cottages could be released for the occupation of the pilgrims. The E.O. readily agreed to my proposal and requested me to identify a suitable site at Tirumala for locating the office.

After going round some of the places, I selected a place in Garudadri Nagar nearby my residential cottage, where already a go down was constructed for storing some items pertaining to the Engineering wing. I suggested for construction DFO's office on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of that building. When I first discussed about this location with the Executive Engineers there was no objection from them. Then I requested them to design a Plan for the building and gave them some guidelines regarding my requirement for the office. They gave me some designs with which I was not satisfied and suggested some changes to suit my ideas. I suggested a spacious chamber for the DFO with an anteroom and attached toilet, 4 portions for the Range Officers with 2 rooms each so that one room will be for the Office and records and the other for their chamber and a spacious hall to accommodate the ministerial and executive staff and a common toilet for the staff. In the beginning the Executive Engineers hesitated to take all my suggestions and finally I convinced them and got the design and Plan prepared by them according to my choice.

In next coordination meeting, I told the Executive Officer about my selection of the site for the office building and about the Plan prepared by the Engineering wing.

Immediately after the meeting, the Executive Officer along with the Joint Executive Officer and other Officers came along with me to the proposed site and I have exhibited the Plan and explained about the need for the construction of the building as per the Plan prepared. The E.O. and the J.E.O. were convinced and they asked the concerned Executive Engineer to prepare the Estimates and take up the work by calling for Tenders.

Thus I could succeed in getting a permanent building for the DFO's office at Tirumala. I did not have the opportunity of functioning from that building as it was not ready during my tenure as DFO at Tirumala. But whenever I go to Tirumala and meet the DFO in that building, I feel so much elated feeling that it was due to my efforts this building had come in to existence.

**Allotment of Site for Construction of a Forest Rest House at Tirumala:**

There was a demand for allotment of a site for the construction of a Forest Rest House at Tirumala by the Forest Department. As time passed, there was no progress in this matter. I thought that the process of allotment of site and construction of the Forest Rest House would take a long time and so I put up a proposal to the Executive Officer to allot a Cottage for the time being to be utilized by the Forest Department as a Rest House for which the E.O. agreed and the JEO had allotted a Cottage just opposite to my residential cottage in Garudadri Nagar. I contacted the OSD in-charge of Reception and got all the required items for the Cottage including the carpets.

Later, on the advice of the Conservator of Forests, I had gone round the areas in the outskirts of Tirumala for locating the site for Forest Rest House. Finally I selected the site in which the present FRH is located. Some people were critical of selection of that site for FRH saying that it was far away from the Temple and it would be inconvenient for the people who visit Tirumala without transport facility. But my main consideration was the picturesque view of surroundings from the FRH, at that time, and the availability of a fresh water storage sump, behind the site, from which water was being supplied to a part of Tirumala town. Even if there was water scarcity in the cottages down below, we could fetch water from this source. So I selected this site and the Conservator of Forests who inspected the area had also approved it. Finally the Executive Officer and the Joint Executive Officer inspected the site and approved it. It was then decided in a meeting with Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests and the Executive Officer that the amount for construction of the Forest Rest House would be deposited by the Forest Department with TTD and the TTD would take up the construction of the FRH as per the design and Plan furnished by the Department.

Now this area in which our Forest Rest House is located, had become a prime area wherein the Police Guest House had come up by its side and also the Reliance Guest House and the posh building of TTD, the "Sannidhanam" etc. have come up there.

—To be continued

# DISPENSABLE COMMODITIES ?

BY

V.V.HARIPRASAD

"Sir I was a landlord of 20 acres of land. I have bequeathed my property to my children. Now I am penniless. My children have deserted me. I am hungry. Kindly help me," the septuagenarian clad in white dhoti and shirt was begging for alms. The hunger with which he must have resorted to begging was conspicuous in his looks. I was in the driving seat of my vehicle. I was moved with his plight and parted with some money to him. Probably he did not expect that currency note from me. He raised his hand in a gesture of benediction and looks of gratitude. One of my friends told me, "We come across this kind of persons every now and then on the roads. They are not to be trusted," "Do not be so gullible," he warned.

I do not dispute with the contention of my friend. May be he is right in his perception. But at the same time my sense of proportion wanted me to think a while. When I put a question to me asking me "Is it not true that neglecting of parents has become the order of the day notwithstanding the fact that they bequeath their hard earned money and property to their children?" Is it not a naked fact? This kind of attitude and ungrateful behavior among the younger generations is quite ubiquitous in our present day society.

Gone are the days when we the Indians used to give abundant respect to the elders as part of our culture. Age old ethos of Indian culture does not find place in the present day society of nuclear family system.

"And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years," said Abraham Lincoln.

But what a pity? The parents having put in their heart and soul in bringing up their children, educating them, shaping their careers and above all bequeathing their property to them being subjected to ill treatment, apathy, humiliation and at times even cruelty are to be sympathized with. The law of the land in the form of "Maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens Act 2007" is the statutory option available to the abused senior citizens in India.

I personally know about one of the senior bureaucrats who worked in the capacity of head of a particular department for number of years and who bequeathed his property to his only daughter being subjected to ill treatment and having been left before his death to a state of penury. I know some of his former senior colleagues sending money to him as a matter of solace and also to help him meet his both



ends meet out of sheer concern and respect they had towards him.

I came across one of my close relatives who enjoyed his mother's property, leaving his ailing mother unable even to move to fetch her gulp of water, all alone in a room on a bed awaiting her inevitable death. Ultimately, she died with nobody nearby to her even to offer a glass of water.

The case of a senior retired academician is much more pathetic. After his retirement he celebrated his sons' marriage with grandeur and pomp. He purchased lakhs of rupees worth of jewellery to be presented to his daughter-in-law at the behest of his son. They stay abroad. He fell into the debt trap. His son and daughter-in-law that have been enjoying life abroad while earning millions of dollars refused to come to his rescue by clearing the debts. Even after his retirement he has been doing a job much less than his earlier cadre and official designation by keeping his personal esteem and ego aside, just to pay the EMIs he is bound to pay for clearing his debts.

#### **PLIGHT OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN CHINA:**

"Visit parents or get sued", says Chinese legislation.

As in India, Chinese parents live with their children and look to for advice and in China it is generally a matter of shame for children not to do their duty of taking care of their parents. China

has nearly 167 million people aged over 60, and one million people above 80. An eighth of the population of China is over the age of 60 and more than half of them live alone. By 2015 China will have an estimated 220 million people over 60 and within 40 years the number will rise to 500 million.

On June'26 2012 "The law of protection of the rights and interests of the elders" was proposed to the standing committee of the National People's congress for the first time and was passed in Dec'28 2012.

The law has already been implemented with a WUXI COURT on 21.7.2013 ordering the daughter and son-in-law of a 77 year old woman to visit or be liable to pay fine or face detention.

The law reflects China's growing concern over the plight of its neglected senior citizens and it is expected that this law will provide the legal basis to pursue legal action, if they have been abandoned or disregarded by their children.

#### **THE PLIGHT OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN U.S.A:**

The financial problems of senior citizens around the world persist, with the aging population remaining among the poorest in many countries. In the United States the plight of retirees in debt is no different characterized by surging loans decreasing assets and day to day budgeting problems

. According to the research non-profit

group "American progress" about 3.4 million seniors of age 65 years and older live below poverty line in U.S.A.

- So many elderly Americans have amassed debts in their working years which remain unpaid and carried over into their retirement age. In the latest Census bureau report 44.4 percent of households led by people older than 65 are wallowing in debts.

- American baby boomers or those around 67 to 70 years old today are in financial peril over student loans co-signed or co-borrowed for their children or grandchildren.

- Social security is estimated to keep 40 percent of all Americans of age 65 or older out of poverty. But the truth is many seniors depending on social security find, "it is never enough"

- It is not only the younger generations that have succumbed to the lure of credit cards and the trap of compounded interests. Many American senior citizens have mounting credit card debts. In fact seniors carry 50 per cent more credit card debt than younger people.

#### **SENIOR CITIZENS IN INDIA AND THEIR PLIGHT:**

"After a life time of working, raising families, and contributing to this success of this nation in countless other ways, senior citizens deserve to retire with dignity" said Charlie Gonzalez.

But the reality in case of millions of senior citizens in India was reported to be totally

different.

"2013 Help age India" report on the plight of the senior citizens – says

- ◆ Nationally the Daughter – in-law has been reported as a primary perpetrator of abuse (39%) followed closely by the son (38%)
- ◆ More than one fifth of the elderly (23%) reportedly experienced abuse nationally
- ◆ The most common form of abuse nationally experienced by elderly was Disrespect (79%) followed by verbal abuse (76%) and neglect (69%). 39% elderly faced beating / slapping.
- ◆ 16% of elderly reported facing abuse for 6-10 years, while 28% reported facing abuse for 3-5 years and 26% were facing it for 1 – 2 years.
- ◆ 70% of those abused did not report the matter.

So does any of this sound familiar to us? Are we familiar with someone in our neighborhood who is facing the abuse? The reality is that it is very real and it is happening right around us. But we either choose to ignore or we merely tend to dismiss it as not being our problem.

Why we have reached this point?

Rapid urbanization, competitive life style, growing aspiration for more life style products and an insatiable desire to get ahead. All of these are impacting our lives without realizing the social cost. Today we do not have time to spend

with our children, thanks to the deadlines of reaching office and then staying back late in the office just to meet another dead line. The problem today is that we do not have time since we have to cope up with the work. The spouse is busy trying to cope up with the work at home or office. The children are busy at school and later trying to cope up with the home work. So where does this leave any time for parents or grandparents? What do they do? Where do they go? Who do they speak to?

As *Charlie Gonzalez* said, "A senior citizen deserves to retire with dignity."

Every senior citizen probably has to keep in mind that

♦ One has to live with dignity until he or she breathes his/her last

♦ Let the affection or infatuation that one has in mind towards his/her children not make one turn a blind eye towards the present day realities of life in the society.

In the present day society which is aping western

culture at the cost of ignoring age old Indian values and culture have the senior citizens become the dispensable commodities? I am afraid, "They have been treated so."

My dear fellow senior citizen keep pace with the time, put up with the changing attitudes of this generation and explore all conceivable ways to live with dignity until you breathe your last. Do not leave your spouse at the mercy of your children inspite of the fact that they are very good by nature.

My dear younger friend,

Do you really care and bother about the senior citizens? You better because you are next. Before you know it you will be the next senior citizen. It is the only fact that you can be sure of. Let everybody wake up and be more sensitive to the elders around us, be it at home or in the neighborhood or in public place. Remember it is your turn next. Do you understand? You better understand, "They that sow the wind shall reap the whirl wind."

## INVITATION

The Association of Retired Forest Officers, Telangana & Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad Congratulates Sri V.Linga Rao State Forest Officer, who is retiring from service on attaining the age of superannuation on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2014. He is cordially invited to join the Association of Retired Forest Officers to keep in touch with his old colleagues and to keep himself occupied.

**For further details he may contact the following.**

Sri. B.M.Swami Dass, Secretary      Mobile Number.... 9000817781

Sri. A.V.Govindarajulu, Jt.Secretary      Mobile Number....9440764611.

B.M Swami Dass, Secretary.

# TEACHER: THE TORCH BEARER

By

**Dr. N. Venu Latha**

There are many professions in the world that are opted as a means to livelihood. All professions have their individual identity and significant roles to play and contribution to the society therefore can be placed on a horizontal plane. But of all professions, teaching is meant to be the noblest one. The reason for such an elevated status given to the teacher is because of the highest commitment and responsibility besides immense patience and efficiency the profession demands required to transfer knowledge, rich human values and culture from one generation to the other. The involvement of such utmost qualities undoubtedly stands high apart from the huge amount of sacrifice required for the great and noble cause. The profession not only acts as a strong bridge connecting people to its society but also has the power to transform the same people into citizens by making them realize their responsibilities towards building a healthy and strong society. These are the remarkable heights of achievement expected from this profession. The resultant flying colors of the achievement is bound to bring immense happiness and satisfaction to all. To support the context, it is apt to quote the *sloka* taught to us in our childhood that projects the highly esteemed position of a teacher,

*Matro Devo Bhava, Pitr Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava, Atidhi Devo Bhava*

It tells us that the first visible form of God is the mother who takes all the pain with pleasure and gives birth to her child introducing it to the world. As it is meant no less to God's creation she is given the highest place of regard and the next place to her is given to the father of the child who holds his share of responsibility in taking care of the child. Teacher is the third form of God and is regarded very next to parents for the child because it is the physical life of a child that is gifted from its parents, whereas the intellectual birth: the sole reason for leading a meaningful and purposeful life is a blessing from its teacher. So is this high regard and respect paid to a teacher.

"Those who educate children well are more to be honored than they who produce them; for these only gave them life, that art of living well."

—Aristotle

Teacher plays a key role in every individual's life. She/he is bestowed with amazing power of knowledge and human values that can lay the in-roads to transform a student into an individual. It is from this form of God that we not only gain grounds on the textual or the

theoretical knowledge but also take a helping hand in exploring and realizing self in carving a niche which enables us to fight against all the odds in life. This is what the true teaching-learning process comprises of. The matchless efforts of the teacher finally take its form in the emergence of students as achievers in the game of football with the blend of human values. There is a stark similarity observed between the efforts of the teacher in building and shaping of students' intellectual life and a sculptor toiling on a lifeless stone to transform it into a beautiful, lively and priceless statue that increases its value by time. The strenuous job in the making of an Individual involves parents' efforts that reflect in their responsibility at home while the teachers take-up their role at school. In the process the teacher renders help in exploring, identifying and strengthening the students' innate talents and capabilities. Knowledge imparted and acquired in the right sense helps in establishing a good character in a person that is the *Samskara*. The real essence of knowledge thus directs the pupil to tread along the path leading towards the ultimate destination i.e., realizing the duty of an individual towards self, its family, society and ultimately its mother-land. This journey leads to truth and universality and the role-play of an individual completes in itself only with the blessings of a *guru*.

"There are two kinds of teachers: the kind that fills you with so much quail shot that you can't move, and the kind that just gives you a little prod behind and you jump to the skies." — Robert Frost

One of the classic examples for the role and importance of a teacher in his disciple's life is Sri. Ramakrishna Paramhansa. His disciple, Swami Vivekananda's wisdom and achievements mirror the efficiency of his teacher and such great combination is the rarest. We, the teachers and students should make efforts to take a leaf from their wisdom by following the trails that they have left for us. Faith in teacher and belief in self develops confidence that drives us to work incessantly to reach our goal. Only such work helps us to realize the commitment towards it and yet remain unattached. Such un-attachment results in freedom from disappointments and its connected misery. Life is thus for experiencing and letting others to experience, living and letting others to live, learning and letting others to learn and growing and letting others to grow. A meaningful life is with such learning experiences and its positive practice resulting for a universal purpose. This awareness gives a broad and far-sightedness to life which is possible only with the help of a teacher who possesses and spreads such amazing hues of

wisdom among all the students. It is said that the value of knowledge increases by exponential rate only by sharing and transferring of it and undiluted which results in the form of students' admiration. It is only a teacher who is blessed to experience such invaluable and immeasurable reciprocal that gives an immense satisfaction.

Blessed is a student who has a true teacher for a life-time. Wish and hope we remain students and equally be fortunate to share teachers who enlighten us all our way. My grand salute to all the teachers delivering their true duties and waving the flag of the teaching profession high. In this context, I pay my due respects to the teacher who stood by me as a pillar for support. This piece of writing is dedicated to her as a token of gratitude to my path-finder and to whom I

shall ever be grateful.

The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires." — William Arthur Ward

Teacher's day is the right occasion for celebrating not only belonging to the teaching family but also being blessed with a teacher. All who fit into the frame of the torch bearer by lighting the minds with knowledge, showing the right path and brightening the lives deserve their rightful place with dignity.

Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnuhu, Guru Devo Maheshwaraha, Guru sakshaat Parah Brahma, tasmai shree gurave namah

*(Editor's Note The author is Lecturer-of-English, UCE, K.U., Kothagudem)*

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

VANAPREMI of Aug.14 arrived yesterday. As usual, a treat to go through it, it also carried sad news of demise of Sri C. Sarvotham Rao., a senior colleague. Chincholikar and Maslekar families knew each other. I have met him couple of times at Late Mukhedkar's House. (Mukhedkar was my brother-in-law) He knew my father. He had called me about my articles published in your magazine and about my "Forest Companion" some time back. His was a multi-faceted personality. He was an unassuming officer. I would like to convey my sincere condolences to his family, through VANAPREMI. **May his soul rest in peace**

**Maslekar**



# DOES GOD'S EVERY CREATION HAVE A PURPOSE??

By  
A. Narasimha Reddy.

After I was selected as Asst. Conservator of Forests, I got more reasons to celebrate. After a month of the results, I was excited to see the letter from PCCF that I will be sent to Dehradun for 2 year training at CASFOS (Central Academy for State Forest Service). Before that, I never travelled to North India and always dreamed of staying in the lap of the mighty Himalayas at least for a day! And now my dream had come true!! Not just for a day...but for complete 2 years stay in the lap of Himalayas!!

**FRI & CASFOS:** - CASFOS is located in the heart of beautiful FRI (Forest Research Institute) Campus, which is known as the "Mecca of Indian Forestry", where studies on Scientific Management of Forests started in the year 1906. FRI is located in Dehradun of Uttarakhand which is a "Doon", a flat area surrounded by Shiwalik Ranges of the Himalayas. The campus has the legendary FRI Building, built in 1929 and has an attached Reserved Forest Block for research. The FRI Campus has more than 280 species of birds, including 120 migratory species!!

**Life at CASFOS:** - We had a hectic schedule for the whole day, starting with PT hour (Physical Training) at 6AM in the morning and ending with

Games at 6PM, followed by some assignments or projects to burn the mid-night's oil! But we enjoyed jogging around the FRI campus every day morning, listening to birds singing and chirping great morning music. When our jogging troupe reaches the Bamboo Setum, we used to enjoy the sight of hundreds of Bats calling it a day and going to bed by hanging from the bamboo tops. After the sleepy Classroom sessions, we used to become active again in the evening games session. We used to enjoy playing football and other games just in front of the legendary FRI building shown in many Bollywood movies. After dinner, we used to have a walk just to enjoy the spectacular night view of the Mussoorie city on the top of Hills behind the FRI building where the night lights resemble the scintillating stars!!

**The Litchi:** - I tasted the juicy "Litchi" fruit for the first time in my life after coming to Dehradun and I still remember the first taste of it...so yummy!! There are many Litchi trees in FRI campus, which come to fruiting in summer and we used to relish them every day after evening games hour.

**One night:** - This summer, something very

curious happened in my training period. One night I heard some odd cries during night. On the first day I ignored it...as I was very tired due to our hectic schedule since morning 5am. My eyes start closing as soon as we complete our dinner as we have to wake up for PT the next day morning at 5AM again. But these odd sounds continued for the second day night...again I ignored thinking that it was some animal cry from the adjacent Reserved Forest... but it continued for the third day...which made me curious.

So the next day after dinner, I started walking in the direction of sounds. I noticed some people sitting along the road side and beating drums, shouting in air all throughout the nights. My first impression on seeing them was that they are drunk or gone mad....but a second thought forced me to enquire who are they and what they were doing...and what they revealed was very interesting...

They were driving away Fruit Bats from the Litchi Trees. There are more than 200 Litchi trees around in FRI campus and they were leased to a contractor to extract Litchis for this season. Each tree has a revenue potential of about Rs.30, 000, but there is a threat from the attack of fruit bats! These bats being nocturnal, they used to sleep during day time by hanging in our Bamboo Septum and adjacent RF and wakeup after sunset

and get attracted to the Litchi trees in search of food.

Hence the contractor had deployed day and night watchers for each tree for the ripening stage till they are harvested (Day watchers to drive away the Monkeys!). These watchers drive away the Bats by beating drums, shouting, using focus lights especially during the nights when these Bats are active. The magnitude of the threat from these Bats is such that if the watcher sleeps for just 1 hr, the Bats will empty the entire Tree! And a loss of Rs.30, 000 per Tree! When I shared this with my colleagues the next day...they all were amused and some even watched themselves the next day. We all thought that fruit bats are rightly classified as Vermin!(But a thought later gives the other point of view!)

Soon the Litchi fruit are ripen and were harvested by the contractor and the odd cries in nights came to a silence. The Bats have lost their delicious meal. I wondered what they will feed on from tomorrow. But the next day evening I found these spirited Bats feeding on the *Jamun* trees!!

However, many unanswered questions came to my mind. Is the commercial collection of fruits justified in FRI, a Reserved Forest and the "Mecca of Indian Forestry"? Forget about bats, if all the fruit bearing trees are harvested every season,

what about the food for the 280 Bird species found in FRI Campus??

In this context some of the relevant provisions of WPA (Wild Life Protection Act, 1972) and other issues are discussed below:

What is a Vermin?

- ◆ According to Section 2(34) of WPA, 1972: "vermin" means any wild animal specified in Schedule-V.
- ◆ In general, Vermin are pests or nuisance animals, especially those that threaten human society by spreading diseases or destroying crops and livestock.
- ◆ Hunting & Killing of Vermin are exempted from the general Penal provisions in WPA, 1972
- ◆ At present, under Schedule V of WPA, 1972 the following were declared as Vermin: Common crow, Fruit Bats, Mice, and Rats.

Who can declare wild animals as a vermin?

- ◆ Under Section 62 of WPA, 1972, the Central Government may, declare any wild animal (other than those specified in Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II of WPA), which threaten human society by spreading diseases or destroying crops and livestock to be vermin for any area and for such period by a notification and such wild animal shall be deemed to have been included in Schedule V of WPA.

- ◆ There are demands in some states to declare Monkeys and *Nilgai* (Blue bull) as Vermin!

Why Fruit bats are declared as Vermin?

- ◆ Destroy Fruit crops: Fruit Bats are frugivorous i.e. they feed mainly on ripe fruits, such as mangoes and bananas etc. They are nocturnal and at dusk, these bats forage for ripe fruits. Hence they are considered as a threat to farmers of fruit orchards as they are accused of destroying fruit crops by attacking in large numbers and feeding on them.
- ◆ Natural reservoirs of disease: Researchers found that many fruit bats act as a natural reservoir for a number of diseases including ebola, rabies, and coronaviruses. These can prove fatal to humans and domestic animals.

Are all Fruit bats Vermin?

- ◆ Of the 1,117 species of bats identified in the world, 114 species are found in India.
- ◆ In 2002 the Indian government added the Wroughton's free-tailed bat (*Otomops wroughtonii*) and Salim Ali's fruit bat (*Latidens salimalii*) to Schedule I of the WPA, affording these two species the highest level of protection.
- ◆ The other 112 species of bats in India are still vermin and the Indian flying fox

(*Pteropus giganteus*), also known as the Greater Indian fruit bat is also one of them.

Are there any supporters for these poor creatures?

Paul A. Racey, co-chair with the "Bat Specialist Group" of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Species Survival Commission, has criticized classification of species of bats as vermin in the Wildlife Protection Act (1972). He says, classification of species as vermin will make it extinct, but the Indian authorities had not yet responded to a long-standing demand from international agencies to amend the Wildlife Protection Act to save endangered species of bats. He pointed out that research funded by the Centre revealed that ten of the bat species found in India were forest-dwellers that fed on wild fruits and disperse seeds widely. Only three species of bats found in India visited commercial orchards.

Do these Bats have any Positive role in the Ecosystems?

- ◆ Bats help in seed dispersal and aid pollination in temperate and tropical forests. They are frugivorous or nectarivorous, i.e., they eat fruits or lick nectar from flowers. While ingesting fruit or nectar, these bats expel waste that pollinates and disperse seeds.
- ◆ Bats contribute to pollination of 528 plant and tree species the world over.

◆ Thus they play a vital role in forest regeneration.

◆ Of the 1,117 species of bats identified in the world, 114 species are found in India, of which Wroughton's free-tailed bat (*Otomops wroughtonii*) and Salim Ali's fruit bat (*Latidens salimalii*) are included in Schedule I of WPA in 2002.

#### The Challenge for Bats!

- ◆ Bats carry a negative image in Indian society. They are associated with such things as witchcraft. No one likes them! They are seen as pest by orchid farmers.
- ◆ The Year 2011 has been declared as the Year of the Bat by the UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) and many bat conservation organizations.
- ◆ The main task in the Year of the Bat is to highlight, with scientific evidence, that the bat plays a vital role in the ecosystem.

Hope these poor creatures are given their "Right to Live" at least in the wild!!

(The opinions expressed by the author are personal.)

(Editor's note: The author is undergoing training at State Forest College Dehradun and will be completing his training on 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2014)



## Birth Day Greetings

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

### S.No. Name of Members

|     |                    |            |     |                             |            |
|-----|--------------------|------------|-----|-----------------------------|------------|
|     | Sarva Sri          |            | 8.  | S.Venkateshwarlu            | 22-09-1961 |
| 1.  | A.Raja Reddy       | 13-09-1926 | 9.  | K.Purushotham               | 05-10-1962 |
| 2.  | P.Ranga Rao        | 05-10-1927 | 10. | D.Sudhakar Reddy            | 01-10-1966 |
| 3.  | P.S.Reddy          | 30-09-1932 | 11. | S.Satyanarayana             | 04-10-1967 |
| 4.  | P.V.Krishna Murthy | 03-10-1933 | 12. | A.Sreenivasulu              | 11-09-1967 |
| 5.  | D.S.Gangakhedkar   | 29-09-1934 | 13. | Dr.Rajendra Prasad Khajuria | 05-10-1968 |
| 6.  | J.V.Subba Rao      | 13-09-1934 | 14. | M.Samuel                    | 12-09-1978 |
| 7.  | A.H.Qureshi        | 07-09-1941 | 15. | Smt.Priyanka Varghese       | 08-09-1978 |
| 8.  | V.Kishan Reddy     | 20-09-1941 | 16. | N.Rama Chandra Rao          | 18-09-1984 |
| 9.  | P.Subramanyam      | 05-10-1946 |     |                             |            |
| 10. | K.S.Rao            | 26-09-1948 |     |                             |            |
| 11. | Narpat Singh       | 15-09-1952 |     |                             |            |
| 12. | G.Sagar            | 23-09-1952 |     |                             |            |
| 13. | V.V.Hari Prasad    | 25-09-1953 |     |                             |            |

### S.No. Name of Working Officers

|    |                         |            |
|----|-------------------------|------------|
|    | Sarva Sri               |            |
| 1. | Dr.Suresh Nagesh Jadhav | 01-10-1955 |
| 2. | S.B.L.Misra             | 30-09-1956 |
| 3. | V.Linga Rao             | 09-09-1956 |
| 4. | K.S.Reddy               | 10-09-1957 |
| 5. | B.Jayachandra Reddy     | 01-10-1958 |
| 6. | Chandan Mitra           | 27-09-1958 |
| 7. | M.Keshavaram            | 05-10-1960 |



## THE FOREST PROTECTION AND REGENERATION

By

**R. Bala Krishna**

Let us invoke the visible sun god and mother earth to seek their blessings before making an effort to understand our mother earth who expects nothing from us. The entire universe has emerged from parabrahma, the supreme lord. It is surya (the sun) who is the cause of all that exists causing day and night and supports the entire life system on mother earth. Therefore, the mother earth is a gift offered by the supreme power for the mankind. The mother earth possess abundant natural resources namely, land, water, and forests which are vital and a life line for the livelihood of mankind. Hence, we the humans should make use of the available gift of the nature namely forest resources to the maximum use for the all round improvement and development for the comfortable human living both for the present and future generations to come.

As per the available data, our country's population keeps on increasing almost equivalent to australia's population annually. Hence, the situation calls for more participation both by the government and forest management / administration to explore and expand the forestry activities even outside the forest land to unearth the hidden, valuable, and unlimited resources without affecting the existing formation of forest reserves and environment. It may not be possible to identify a particular land area / zone and its specific nature of resources available but with the cooperation and coordination of some scientific community, researchers, modern technologists, and geological survey of india, it is possible for the government and the forest management to undertake the project. It may not be out of place to mention here and the nation knows better that a large scale of unlawful mining activities and misuse of our country's mineral wealth / land resources have taken place in recent years. It is high time that the new government should give serious thought over the matter.

In this context, only the government's participation

in financing revised and liberalized economic policy reforms and provision of infrastructure and marketing mechanism will be major contributing factors for the successful operation of the project. The government should also encourage all sections of working team of forest officers and administrative personnel by offering the following incentives: attractive salary, recognition of merit, financial incentives, research and networking facilities, and non interference of politicians and their subordinates.

Considering the ever growing population in our country, every sector of production, planning, and decisions on the basis of economic theory and their connected costs over both short and longer period becomes important. Secondly, with a view to increase the production activities in natural forest areas, improve conservation and management, and to bring in more areas under forest cover becomes important. To achieve the object and environmental benefits, the need for decentralizing the entire forest administration of our country has been increasingly felt. Accordingly, the total forest areas of all the 29 states can be divided into four zones for administrative convenience and to achieve the following benefits: generation of increased employment opportunities in rural areas and to needy people, increased revenue to the government, and increased opportunities in forestry activities of forest families.

Hence, the new government comprising the planning commission of india, policy makers, senior administrators of forest management, forest researchers, and officers of the department should give a serious thought over the formation of four zones for the entire forest cover of the country.

A journey of thousand miles starts with a single step ... The formation of four forest zones.

The author is a Retd. Assistant Secretary from L.I.C. of India and Father of Sri. B. Sundar IFS.



# MY JUNGLE BOOK II

By  
**Vidisha R Chirra**

Hello Folks!! I hope your bonding with Mother Nature has strengthened from reading my memorable experiences in the wild through my previous article. As promised, I am here to share more exhilarating experiences of my time in Goa, where I resided the longest as a child. Geographically, Goa is located in the Konkan region, which forms a beautiful western coastline, sandwiched between the vast Arabian Sea and the magnificent Western Ghats. Hmmm, if you think that these attributes could be just ideal for a vast bio-diversification, then you have it bang on!! Personally, these were the best years of my childhood as I got to enjoy the rich Portuguese culture, lush evergreen forests, beautiful beaches, delicious cuisine and most importantly long lasting friendships.

## **Adventurous Field Trips**

My father had frequent official field trips into the wild to inspect work and preserve the ecosystem and every time he would return with an exciting story to tell me, except this one time when I experienced an adventure of my own. I was accompanying him to a waterfall near the Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary and was particularly enthralled about the trip since my friends were coming along. We embarked on a short hike towards the base of the waterfalls and were awed on reaching the serene destination.



The waterfall is aptly named the Dudh Sagar, which looks milky white flowing between mountains and falling from a great height. We kids were excited and immediately rushed to dip our feet in the refreshing running waters. As my father was capturing my memories in his camera he suddenly saw me slipping from a rock and heading towards a whirlpool. I was horrified and gasping for air when my father – my hero jumped into the water and reached out to save me from drowning. He tried his best to push me above water but was having trouble swimming since he had his shoes on. As we struggled, my father realized that he had to act fast as the water was rapidly headed towards a crevice and then a 5 meter fall with sharp rocks at the bottom. Had there been any delay of my father jumping into the waters to hold me it would have been a disastrous end. Meanwhile the brave forest guards, who were witnessing

this, quickly jumped into the water and formed a human wall to prevent us from crashing into the rocks. They then pulled us out to safety and handed me over to my mom who this whole time was petrified and hugged me in great relief. I felt like I had a second birth!

### **The Forest Sanctuary**

Another nature's visit was the Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary located in the heart of Goa, home to many animals including the famous Malabar Giant Squirrel. The Sanctuary hosts tourists in scenic cottages, provides tours and hikes into the wild and informative sessions at the zoo. A unique thing about this sanctuary is that it helps protect the wildlife nearby and aims at rescuing and rehabilitating wild animals. One such animal they had rescued was a leopard which had accidentally fallen into a well at night while fleeing from the villagers. On hearing the news my father and the staff went with ladders, ropes, cage, long bamboo sticks, daggers, nets and a whole lot of rescue material to the site and successfully rescued the leopard in a three hour long operation. The leopard was brought to the zoo for treatment and in company of other leopards soon regained its full health and also gave birth to a cub a few months later. It was the prettiest baby animal I have ever seen and one of the perks of being with my Father was that I got to touch and pet it!

I did a lot of exciting stuff at Bondla like going on

hikes, holding non-poisonous snakes and riding on Elephants – Radha and Krishna. I remember another tense moment which my father underwent when the male tusker went into Musth (frenzied state associated with the rutting season) and trashed most of the Zoo. He was completely out of control and had resorted to hurting it's mahout with its long, sharp tusks. The officials had to call upon a Vet from Karnataka who had expertise in tranquilizing elephants with darter gun. They lured him with jaggery and bananas into a huge enclosure and tranquilized him. While it was drugged they cut his tusks short, chained him and treated him by spraying cold water to cool down his body temperature. In a few days he was back to being normal and was re-united with Radha and was ready to take everyone on a safari ride.

### **Turtle Protection**

The Morjim beach in Goa is a nesting and a hatching habitat for the endangered Olive Ridley turtles. Turtles are known to have a strong bio-magnetic sense which gives them a directional ability and can fascinatingly find their way back to its place of hatching and choose to nest there. Ridley turtles come to shore to lay eggs generally at late night between 11 pm and 3 am during the months of November and December. It's a beautiful sight to watch the turtle dig a small pit in the beach sand and lay their eggs. They lay anywhere

between 80 to 100 eggs, which are round with soft shell and look like ping pong balls. Unfortunately these precious eggs fall prey to the greedy eyes of poachers who dig them out and sell it to make good money.

Due to rampant poaching the environmentalists saw a decline in the number of turtles and were glad when my father launched the Olive Ridley protection project in 1996. The officials would identify the nests, surround them with fish nets and mark it with a board mentioning the nesting and expected hatching date. They made sure to keep the poachers at bay and protected the eggs till they hatched. I had the opportunity of watching these eggs hatch and the baby turtles swim safely to their home in the sea.

Live and Let Live

After Goa, we moved to different big cities which meant the huge forests were replaced with concrete jungles, the enchanting silence turned into loud noises and the melancholy chirps of the birds were nowhere heard. Although the society made me ambitious and instilled good values, I still thrive for that every opportunity to revisit 'Her'. I terribly miss Nature's tranquility which often makes me wonder - the materialistic pleasures that we strive hard to invent everyday have stolen us away from the true beauty that a glimpse of nature could offer and we often forget that we share this planet with so many other beautiful creatures. "Live and Let Live" - Let this be our motto and let us join hands in protecting our wildlife so that our future generations can cherish it and understand its importance.

## CORRIGENDUM

In Vana Premi of August 2014 (Vol. 15, No. 8) the following corrections may please be noted in the Article "Legends of Forest Department":

1. **Page 28:** In the photograph on the top of the page, the first Officer from left is **Dr. Dosth Ali Khan** and not Sri. Mazharuddin.
2. Similarly in the same page in the photograph below, the 7th Officer from left also is **Dr. Dosth Ali Khan** and not Sri. Mazharuddin.
3. In the same photograph the name of the 8th Officer from the left and also in the

photograph in page: 27 the name of the 2nd Officer from the left may please be read as "**Sri. Rai Daulat Rai**" instead of Sri. Raja Doulath Roy.

4. **Page 29:** In the photograph on the top of the page, the 3rd Officer from left is **Dr. Dosth Ali Khan** and the 5th Officer is **Sri. Mazharuddin Ahmad**.

While regretting for the above errors, I thank Sri. K. Buchiram Reddy, IFS (Retd) for correcting me.

———**V. SANTHASEELA BABU**

## **CHINESE ADVICE TO 60-YEARS AND OLDER PEOPLE VERY SOUND & TIMELY EASTERN ADVICE TO ALL OF US.....**

Because none of us have many years to live, and we can't take along anything when we go, so we don't have to be too thrifty.

Spend the money that should be spent, enjoy what should be enjoyed.

DON'T WORRY about what will happen after we are gone, because when we return to dust, we will feel nothing about praises or criticisms. The time to enjoy the worldly life and your hard earned wealth will be over!

DON'T WORRY too much about your children, for children will have their own destiny and should find their own way. Don't be your children's slave. Care for them, love them, give them gifts but also enjoy your money while you can. Life should have more to it than working from the cradle to the grave!! Don't chase money to jeopardize your health.

DON'T EXPECT too much from your children. Caring children, though caring, would be too busy with their jobs and commitments to render much help.

Uncaring children will fight over your assets even when you are still alive, and wish for your early demise so they can inherit your properties and wealth.

Your children take for granted that they are rightful heirs to your wealth; but that you have no claims to their money.

60 plus year olds, don't trade in - your health for wealth, by working yourself to an early grave

anymore. Because your money will, not be able to buy your health.

When to stop making money, and how much is enough? (A hundred thousand, One million, ten million, One billion)?

Out of thousand hectares of good farm land, you can consume only three quarts (of rice) daily; out of a thousand mansions, you only need eight square meters of space to rest at night. So, as long as you have enough food and enough money to spend, that is good enough. You should live happily. Every family has its own problems.

Just DO NOT COMPARE with others for fame and social status and see whose children are doing better etc., but challenge others for happiness, health, enjoyment, quality of life and longevity. DON'T WORRY about things that you can't change because it doesn't help and it may spoil your health. You have to create your own well-being and find your own place of happiness. As long as you are in good health, think about happy things, do happy things daily and have fun in doing, then you will pass your time happily every day.

One day passes WITHOUT happiness, you will lose one day. One day passes WITH happiness and then you gain one day. In good spirit, sickness will cure; In a happy spirit, sickness will cure faster; in high and happy spirits, sickness will never come.

With good mood, suitable amount of exercise, always in the sun, variety of foods, reasonable amount of vitamin and mineral intake, hopefully you will live another 20 or 30 years of healthy life of pleasure.

ABOVE ALL

Learn to cherish the goodness around... and FRIENDS.....They all make you feel young and "wanted"... without them you are surely to feel lost!!

Wishing you all the best for the years to come.

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEPRESSION & NORMAL SADNESS

Major depression is one of the most common mental disorders in the United States, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. In 2012, an estimated 16 million U.S. adults had at least one major depressive episode, or bout of depressive symptoms, in the past year.

But despite how common the illness is, many people do not understand exactly what it means to have depression, and often think of it as being the same as sadness.

**"Depression is one of the most tragically misunderstood words in the English language,"** writes Stephen Ilardi, an associate professor of clinical psychology at the University of Kansas, in a blog post on the Psychology Today website. "When people refer to depression in everyday conversation, they usually have something far less serious in mind," than what the disorder actually entails. "In fact, the term typically serves as a synonym for mere sadness."

### Here are some facts about depression:

◆ Although major depression can strike people of any age, the median age at onset is 32.5, according to Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

◆ Depression is more common in women than in men, according to Washington University.

◆ Men with depression are more likely than depressed women to abuse alcohol and other substances, according to Jill Goldstein, director of research at the Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. Depressed men may also try to mask their sadness by turning to other outlets, such as watching TV, playing sports and working excessively, or engaging in risky behaviors, Goldstein told Live Science in an interview earlier this year.

◆ Men's symptoms of depression may be harder for other people to recognize, and the illness is missed more frequently in men, Goldstein said.

◆ Men with depression are more likely than women with the condition to commit suicide, Goldstein said. Men with depression may go longer without being diagnosed or treated, and so men may develop a more devastating mental health problem.

◆ Symptoms of depression extend far beyond feeling sad, and may include: loss of interest and pleasure in normal activities, irritability, agitation or restlessness, lower sex drive, decreased concentration, insomnia or excessive sleeping and chronic fatigue and lethargy, according to Mayo Clinic.

# NEWS AND NOTES

## **Basics explained: How Reliance Industries**

**earns its money:-** Reliance Industries is India's largest private sector company earning Rs. 4.46 lakh crore in annual revenue. India's economy, measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), was worth Rs. 60 lakh crore in 2013-14. The company made Rs 22,493 crore in profits in fiscal year 2013-14, according to its annual report. It also announced plans to invest Rs 1.5 lakh crore across its businesses. So, where does this money come from?

1. **Refining:-** When oil or gas is produced, it is in a very crude form. Before being sold, it goes through many processes that refine the petroleum product. This is RIL's key business. 70% of its revenue comes from the refining business. In 2013-14, the company earned Rs. 3, 15,574 crore from the segment, as against a total of Rs. 4, 46,339 crore. In terms of profits, the segment accounts for 59.4% of RIL's total profit. "Our refining business delivered.

The profitability of the business is measured by the Gross Refining Margin (GRM) – the difference between the price of the final product and the costs of crude oil. GRM averaged at \$8.1 in FY14 as against \$9.1/bbl in the previous year. "Though refining margins remained weaker compared to last year, RIL performed significantly better than the benchmark Singapore GRM which averaged at \$5.9/bbl during the year," RIL said.

**2. Petrochemical business:** This is RIL's second largest business, accounting for 22% of its total revenue and 37% of its total profits. This business deals with production and marketing of petro-chemical products like Olefins and Aromatics, which are used to make products like detergents, plastics, adhesives, etc. In comparison with the refining business, the petrochemical segment involves less cost. This is why it contributes more towards.

**3. Exploration and production:** RIL also earns money from exploring oil and gas blocks and producing from the same upon discovery. It earns 2.4% of its revenue or Rs 10,888 crore from this business. It makes a profit of Rs. 2,811 crore, 12.5% of its total profits. However, it is down marginally on a year-on-year basis because of a fall in domestic production of natural gas from its Krishna Godavari block KG-D6. This was only partially offset by the

**4 Retail:** 4% of its revenues or Rs 18,315 crore comes from RIL's other business interests like retail, telecom and textile. These together earn the company Rs 1,142 crore in profits. Off these, its retail business is the biggest. FY2013-14 revenues grew 34% to Rs 14,496 crore. "We are now India's largest retailer and turned profitable this y

**5. Telecom:** RIL's subsidiary Reliance Jio Infocomm acquired 3G or Broadband Wireless



Access (BWA) spectrum and LTE or 4G spectrum, allowing it RIL to offer telecom services across India. This cost the company Rs 11,054 crore. Currently, RIL's subsidiary is preparing to roll out 4G services in places like Mumbai and Jamnagar. While it only earned revenue of Rs 546 crore in the year and has not yet made any profits, the segment may start

**6) Other income:** Companies invest a portion of their money in securities like stocks and bonds. RIL has invested Rs 52,692 crore in multiple instruments like shares, debentures, bonds and mutual funds. More than half of this sum has been invested in shares of companies. This has paid dividends to the company, which earned Rs 8,936 crore from interest payments and profits from investments. Reliance makes more money from money than most of its

**Crazy Man who walks backwards:** - Mani Manithan is a crazy man. And when we say crazy, we mean it in a good way. Manithan runs a cell phone store in Tirupattur, Tamil Nadu. He seems like an everyday guy—until you notice what's different about him. He only walks backwards. Manithan claims to have been walking backwards since 1989—so much so that he's forgotten how to walk normally. "Walking normally is more of a challenge - my mind has forgotten how to do it. I have become very comfortable walking like this," he says. You must absolutely know the reason for this ridiculous pursuit.

He also claims that he protested the US invasion of Iraq by walking backwards nude, but was arrested within the first kilometer and sent to jail for three days. So here's what you can do to stop Manithan from walking backwards.

Don't be communal. Be nice to people. Help to spread literacy. Help people learn to read and write. Petition the leaders of the world for nuclear disarmament. Because till that happens, Manithan promises to keep walking

### **Indian Politician Has A Dazzling Gold Shirt**

**Worth \$213,000:** - To celebrate his birthday, Pankaj Parakh, an Indian businessman made himself a gold shirt worth about \$213,000, Parakh is also a member of the National Congress party in the state of Maharashtra.

The shirt which is made of 18-22 carat gold, weighs about 9 pounds. It took 20 men 3,200 hours to stitch it together and it has an inner lining to prevent chafing.

Parakh is a high-school dropout who went on work in his family's textile business. "My family is hardly impressed or interested in my love for gold. They just ignore and accept it as a part of domestic life. But the rest of my extended family thinks I am weird," Parakh told the Independent. He says some think his usual display of gold is ostentatious or that he's mocking the poor. But he's quick to point out that he is charitable as well.

Parakh isn't the first Indian with a gold shirt. You might remember Datta Phuge who, in 2013, put \$230,888 or a third of his worth into a gold shirt. (Reported in March, 2013, Vana Premi)

*(Pls see last cover page for photo)*

### **Second Wedding For 9-year-old Boy & His 61-**

**year-old Wife:** - A nine-year-old schoolboy has become one of the world's youngest grooms for the second time – marrying his 62-year-old wife again. Looking a little taller in last year's silvery tuxedo, baby faced Saneie Masilela clutched the hand of Helen Shabangu as they repeated their vows one year on. Last year the boy, from nearby Tshwane, tied the knot with bride Helen after claiming he had been told by his dead ancestors to wed. Shockingly his family took the message from the heavens seriously and hurriedly forked out £500 for the bride and a further £1,000 for the big day. The second marriage ceremony was this time held at the home of the blushing bride in Ximhungwe in Mpumalanga, South Africa, in front of around 100 guests. Wide-eyed residents looked on as the married mother-of-five shared a piece of cake, a toast and even, a kiss with her young groom Sanele – and long-term husband Alfred Shabangu, 66.

### **Why Indian gold demand will fall below last year's levels** : - MUMBAI/SINGAPORE (Reuters) -

Indian gold demand in 2014 will fall below last year's record levels as import restrictions are expected to remain in place, despite an improvement in demand in the second half of

the year, the World Gold Council (WGC) said.

Demand in 2014 will be 850-950 tones, the industry body said, down 50 tons from its earlier forecast. China's demand forecast was also lowered to 900-1,000 tons from an earlier 1,000-1,100 tons.

The forecasts put consumption in India and China below record purchases of 974.8 tons and 1,120.1 tons respectively last year, when gold prices slumped 28 percent after a 12-year bull run. Global gold demand fell 16 percent in the second quarter, according to WGC's quarterly report released on Thursday.

Consumers had brought forward their purchases after the sharp price drop last year, eating into 2014 demand. Second-quarter demand in India fell 39 percent, while in top buyer China demand halved, the report said.

In India, tough rules on imports - which have hurt demand - could remain in place for the rest of the year, as uncertainties over oil prices and U.S. monetary policy could deter the government from any easing, said Somasundaram PR, head of the WGC's operations in India.

Struggling with a high trade deficit, India last year raised its gold import duty to a record 10 percent and made it mandatory to export a fifth of all bullion imports. Gold is India's second-biggest expense on the import bill after oil.

"What's the point in relaxing everything and be faced with a higher interest rate scenario and

higher oil prices," said Somasundaram. "Given all that I think (the rules) might extend into the first quarter of next year."

### **Indian Scientist develops seedless mangoes:**

- First came seedless grapes. Now, Indian scientists have developed what could be the ultimate delicacy - a seedless mango which is finely textured and juicy, with a rich, sweet and distinctive flavor when mature.

"We have developed a seedless mango variety from hybrids of mango varieties Ratna and Alphonso," V.B. Patel, chairman of the horticulture department at the Bihar Agriculture University (BAU) at Sabour in Bhagalpur district, told IANS. Trials of the new variety, named Sindhu, are under way at different locations in the country but the result of the one at BAU suggests it could be suitable for both integrated horticulture and kitchen gardening.

"We are happy and enthusiastic as well as confident and hopeful of improving the seedless mango variety," Patel said.

He said that an average fruit weighs 200 grams and its pulp, which is yellowish in color, has less fiber than other mango varieties.

He said the trials of the Sindhu variety, originally developed at the regional fruit research station of the Konkan Krishi Vidyapeeth at Dapoli in Maharashtra's Konkan region, has thrown up good fruiting on a three-year-old plant this year. It generally grows in bunch and the fruit matures

in the middle of July.

BAU vice chancellor M.L. Choudhary said the university has, on an experimental basis, decided to recreate plants of this variety and make them available to Bihar's mango growers during the next season.

"The seedless variety also has good export potential. The university would provide quality plants to mango growers in 2015 to exploit the export market," he added.

Patel said our trial has successfully established that seedless mango could be grown in local condition.

According to the National Horticulture Mission (NHM), Bihar ranks third in mango cultivation and covers about 50 percent - a little over 38,000 hectares - of the total fruit area in the state. The produce last year was in the region of 1.5 million tons. Malda, Mallika, Jardaloo, Gulabkhas, Bumbai, Daseri and Chausa are major mango varieties grown in the state.

But, then, no longer will one be able to utter this Indian homily: "*Aam khana hai ya gutli ginni hai*" loosely translated as "Do you want to eat mangoes or count the seeds" but in reality meaning 'Don't look a gift horse in the mouth'. And, there are many who will lament being denied the pleasure of licking the seed clean of the fruit. As they say, you just can't win them all!

### **How effective is walking for weight loss? :-**

There are so many ways to lose weight and

walking is certainly one of them! It may not be as intense as, say weight training in a gym, but that does not mean it is not an effective weight loss method. All you need to do is be consistent with it and have patience, as it can take some time for you to see results. While it's well worth the wait, walking can be monotonous to some, but you can keep the process interesting and yourself committed to the activity with a few tips:

**Track your progress** – These days you get various devices such as pedometers that allow you to see how close you are to your fitness goal.

**Make music your companion** – If walking is getting a bit monotonous, add music to liven up the process. You get music gadgets which can be attached to your fitness gear so that you don't have to hold them in your hand while walking.

**Change your route** – Doing the same thing time and again can be boring. To spice things up, challenge yourself to a new route every once in a while. This will keep things interesting and will also require more effort from your end to fulfil the challenge.

**Benefits of walking:** If you still aren't convinced about walking your way to a lighter you, here are some facts which will boggle your mind. According to fitness and diet expert, Akansha Jhalani, 'Weight loss does not only happen, if you spend numerous hours in the gym on a weight training or cardio routine. Something as simple as brisk walking can also help you shrink your

waistline.' Walking at 6.5 km/h, a fairly standard pace can help a 65 kg man burn 362 calories per hour. She shares a few more benefits of walking.

Walking helps tone your muscles as you work on your lower body including your thighs, glutes, hamstrings, calves.

It increases bone strength. When you walk, you are essentially strengthening your bones by keeping them engaged and your chances of bone diseases such as osteoporosis, arthritis also decrease.

Walking keeps you in good spirits as when you walk, your body releases endorphins which are responsible for keeping us a happy and joyful mood.

Walking also keeps diseases at bay and even helps manage existing ones. People who have diabetes, high blood pressure can go for walks every day as it will help regulate their heart rate and also improve their blood sugar levels. The pace needs to be monitored by a doctor before you start.

According to Global Health Authorities, walking 10,000 steps (6.4 km) every day is enough to help you lose weight and stay fit.

**Tips to keep in mind:** If you are planning to take up walking as a fitness regimen, you can start slow and then increase the intensity and duration as you progress.

Engage in 30-45 minutes of walking every day to reap in its benefits.

Walk wearing comfortable sports shoes which will support your heel and foot. If you are planning to go barefoot, there are special, thin shoes available for the same too.

Morning is the best time to go for a brisk walk as there is more oxygen in the air and less pollution as well.

**Elephant death toll rises in Africa as birth rate goes down: Study:** - London, Aug 19 (ANI):

A new study has raised an alarm by revealing that more elephants in Africa are being killed than are being born in a year. Researchers said in a study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that almost 35,000 elephants have been killed since 2010 in the African continent, reported the BBC. They also warned that if the killing continues at this rate, the entire population will be wiped out in the next 100 years.

A kilogram of ivory is worth thousands of dollars and with the rapidly growing market in Asia, the demand for elephant tusks are soaring in recent years, the report added.

**Hatha yoga improves cognitive performance in older adults:** - Washington, : A new study has claimed that 'hatha yoga' helps in increasing brain function amongst older adults.

According to the researchers, practicing hatha yoga three times a week for eight weeks improved sedentary older adults' performance on cognitive tasks that were relevant to everyday life.

The findings involved 108 adults between the ages of 55 and 79 years of age, 61 of whom attended hatha yoga classes. The others met for the same number and length of sessions and engaged in stretching and toning exercises instead of yoga.

At the end of the eight weeks, the yoga group was speedier and more accurate on tests of information recall, mental flexibility and task-switching than it had been before the intervention. The stretching-and-toning group saw no significant change in cognitive performance over time. The differences seen between the groups were not the result of differences in age, gender, social status or other demographic factors, the research team reported.

Hatha yoga is an ancient spiritual practice that involves meditation and focused breathing while an individual moves through a series of stylized postures, explained Neha Gothe, who led the study with University of Illinois professor Edward Mc Auley.

The studies suggest that yoga has an immediate quieting effect on the sympathetic nervous system and on the body's response to stress, she added.

The results of the study are only preliminary and involve a fairly short-term intervention, the researchers said. Further research is needed to confirm the results and reveal the underlying brain mechanisms at play.

**What makes the 'world's best diet' revealed:**

Wellington, Researchers have revealed the 'world's best diet' that would help people to shed kilos and would help them to not on more weight.

The researchers from the University of Copenhagen found that a high protein/lower carbohydrate diet pattern is the best diet ever and according to the 'World's Best Diet', which is based on a large European study known as the Diogenes Diet, people on low GI carb and high protein combo diet not only kept the weight off during the six months of the study but they also continued to lose weight too.

Jennie Brand-Miller, Professor of Human Nutrition at the University of Sydney's Charles Perkins Centre. Brand-Miller revealed that this way of eating works because both protein and low GI carbs help us produce more of the satiety hormones that keep us feeling full.

There are no fluffy carbs in this diet. Instead it's based on fresh vegetables, lean protein sources like fish, poultry, legumes, nuts and dairy foods and dense, grainy foods like rye bread, pumpernickel and barley - the book's recipe for rye porridge with apple and hazelnuts is the polar opposite of lightweight breakfast cereal. The researchers said that the reason these robust carbs are more filling than their more refined cousins like white bread isn't just that they keep

blood sugar levels steadier and they also stimulate cells in the gut that produce one of the satiety hormones we need to feel full. These cells are located deep down in the gut - a place that rapidly digested carbs never reach because they're digested in the upper half of the gut.

**Adopt healthy habits to maintain youthful**

**looks: -** Growing older means becoming settled in career and personal life, but it also takes away our youthful looks. Wear sunscreen, eat well and get sufficient sleep to keep your skin looking young.

Kiran Lohia, medical director of Lumiere Dermatology, shares a few healthy tips for skin:

- \* Eat healthy meals with lots of fruits and vegetables to help prevent oxidative damage.

And, don't forget to eat enough protein so your skin can create collagen and elastin.

- \* Sleep at least seven to eight hours a night so your skin has enough time to rejuvenate and heal itself.

- \* Exercise daily and avoid alcohol, cigarettes or drugs. Daily exercise has been proven to help keep your skin younger, while avoiding toxins will help preserve its natural youth.

- \* The sun's rays cause skin ageing, so protecting from them is essential. Wear sunscreen of at least SPF 30++ so that you are protected from both UVA and UVB rays. Reapply it after every four hours.



# THE TALE OF AN UNSUNG DOCTOR

Ratnam Pillai, a Hyderabad-based doctor, worked as medical assistant to Sir Ronald Ross who linked mosquito bite to malaria in 1897. The proud possession for the four grandchildren of Dr. Pillai – Shela, Shirley, Franklin and Samuel – is the medals.

The whole world remembers the contribution of Sir Ronald Ross, the doctor who linked mosquito bite to malaria on August 20, 1897 and won a Nobel Prize for the discovery. A very few, however, know that there was a Hyderabad-based doctor, Ratnam Pillai, who was a medical assistant to Dr. Ross at the military hospital for Indian soldiers in Begumpet during the epochal discovery.

While the contribution of Dr. Pillai was largely left unsung, his grandchildren still cherish his priceless memorabilia, which they could salvage from getting lost in time. Staying in a modest house in West Marredpally, Secunderabad, Dr. Pillai's grandchildren have been fighting for due recognition to their grandfather's work for quite some time.

"He did his medicine from Royapuram Medical School in Madras and joined Indian Medical Service as hospital assistant at Military Hospital, Bolaram and later at Begumpet hospital with Dr. Ross. He has served Indian soldiers in the Burmese war and was promoted as Subedar Major," says his granddaughter, Shela Paupens. The proud possession for the four grandchildren of Dr. Pillai – Shela, Shirley, Franklin and Samuel – are the medals.

"My grandfather was awarded silver medals by



the British Government for his meritorious service. In fact, he also has received an honorary sword for his work. You can clearly see his name written on the edges of these medals," says a proud Samuel.

## **'Contribution has gone unnoticed'**

Historians point out that the contribution of Indian soldiers and the doctor in malaria research has largely gone unnoticed.

"The hospital was meant for Indian soldiers, who had malaria and the research was done on them. In fact, Dr. Pillai had played a vital role in malaria research, but his contribution was not acknowledged," says historian Anuradha Reddy.

Interestingly, a large number of members from Tamil-speaking community had migrated to Secunderabad in the early 1800s after the signing of subsidiary alliance between Nizams and the British. "We believe that Dr. Pillai too migrated from Madras to Secunderabad during this period," she says. The family members too lament lack of recognition.

"When he died in 1943, we were told by our relatives that he was draped in the British flag and laid to rest in Bhoiguda cemetery. We have tried to find the grave, but unfortunately could not succeed. All we have are his medals and accounts of his work with Dr. Ross. The government should commemorate Dr. Pillai's contribution too," the grandchildren demand.

## LEGAL NOTES

### **Sare Laxmaiah Naidu Vs. The State of A.P rep. by the Chief Secretary**

This case pertains to a habitual red sanders smuggler, who has been sent to Jail under preventive detention by the District Magistrate, Kadapa. The detention is questioned by his father-in-law in a writ petition filed in the High Court of A.P. on several grounds, but they were rejected and the writ petition is dismissed. Please read on.

Sare Laxmaiah Naidu filed writ petition No. 6317 of 2014 against the State of A.P rep. by the Chief Secretary to Government (G.A. Dept) and the Collector & District Magistrate, Kadapa, challenging the detention of his son-in-law Machupalli Ramaiah S/o Venkataiah aged 35 R/o Jandlavaram village, Mydukur Mandal, under Sec. 3 of the A.P. Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Boot Leggers, Dacoits, Drug Offenders, Goondas, Immoral Traffic Offenders and Land Grabbers Act, 1986. The detention order of the D.M. was passed on 11.7.2013 and it was confirmed by the Government vide G.O. Rt. No. 3819 G.A. (Law & Order) Department dated 26.8.2013.

The detention was ordered for frequently committing offences for which cases were booked under the A.P Forest Act, 1967, Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and Biodiversity Act, 2002, on 30.12.2012, 23.4.2013, 9.5.2013, 30.6.2013 & 2.7.2013 in Sidhout, Produtur and Kadapa Ranges, involving smuggling Red Sanders wood. The detention under the orders of the D.M. was implemented on 20.7.2013. The Advisory Board constituted under Sec. 9 of the Act heard the detenu and after perusing the record confirmed

the order of detention.

Against the order of detention Writ Petition No. 6317 / 2014 was filed by the father-in-law of the detenu. The District Magistrate opposing the writ petition filed counter affidavit and submitted to the court that the property involved in the offences allegedly committed by the detenu is of great value..The matter was heard by the Hon'ble Justice Nooty Ramamohana Rao.

It was argued on behalf of the petitioner that the detenu was not indulging in dangerous activities. Forest offences could be dealt with by the criminal courts under the relevant law. No reason for the preventive detention is given and therefore the detention order is vitiated. The detenu has been arrested on the information given by the other accused which is inadmissible and impermissible in law. Copies of documents relied for detention are not supplied to the detenu.

The Government Pleader referred to the definition of 'Goonda' in Sec.2 (g) of the Act, and submitted that if a person indulges in one serious offence or other, he deserves to be detained preventively. Detaining Authority has taken into consideration all relevant facts and nothing is omitted from objective consideration. An offence involving Red Sanders is a grave crime and illegal felling spells doom to the environment and it therefore requires serious approach.

The Hon'ble Justice observed: With a view to prevent goondas etc. indulging in dangerous activities prejudicial to the maintenance of public order the State Legislature enacted the

Act. The Act defines Goonda as one who habitually commits offences punishable under certain chapters of the Indian Penal Code affecting human body, offences against property, criminal intimidation, insult, annoyance etc. It is apt to remember that forest offences can be committed after gathering necessary information about the availability of source material, a careful study of the degree of vigilance of the forest department officials, safe exit routes after committing the offence. A gap of four months in between two similar offences does not mean that they are sporadic or isolated not having proximate connection with each other.

His Lordship further observed: Entry into reserved forest and carrying any forest produce are prohibited activities. Forests are preserved carefully by adopting conservative methods. The forest cover will have a direct impact upon the key elements of ecology. The adverse effect of the imbalance of ecology/ environment would be felt by everyone in the society. Illegal felling trees, grown over a long period of time in forest will affect dynamically the delicate equilibrium maintained as a measure of protecting environment. Therefore forest offences are equally grave and dangerous offences. The forest offences will have to be dealt with iron-hand to prevent their recurrence. The limited financial resources available for the state will have to be prudently utilized for improving, preserving, protecting and conserving the forest cover. - - - - - Therefore any effort made, which will go a long way in preventing the recurrence of forest offences is wholly a welcome measure. Red Sanders is an endemic timber species. Hence

with a view to prevent him (the detenu) further indulging in dangerous activities of looting national wealth, the detention order was passed.

A plea taken on behalf of the detenu was that he was not caught while committing the offence, but he was arrested on the statements given by other accused persons whose statements are not admissible. The Court observed that forest offences are seldom committed during broad daylight and in public gaze either. Most of the offences can be noticed only after they are accomplished. The reasons are not far to seek. Reserved Forests are spread across vast and sometimes inhospitable terrain and are far from human habitations also. It is only based upon the traces, noticed during subsequent period of routine check / watch they get detected. The information and / or intelligence to percolate the departmental officials take such longer time. That is the reason why the offenders get seldom caught at the scene of offence, but they get caught at far away removed place either for having stored the contraband material or while undertaking its illegal transportation. It is the subsequent interrogation which leads the investigator to the site of the offences, most of the times.

His lordship dealt at length with the matter by following extensively case law on the subject, reasoning and rejecting several submissions made on behalf of the petitioner, finally upholding the detention. The writ petition was dismissed on 9.5.2014.

**Source:**  
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