

VANA PREMI

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Single Copy Rs. 30/-

Vol .16

OCTOBER - 2015

No.10

Vana Premi Wishes Happy Dussehra To All



**Special Issue
on Wild Life**

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

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VANA PREMI

Vol : 16

October - 2015

No.10

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Back side of front and last cover page (Colour) for one year	Rs. 20,000/-
Outer Cover half (Colour) for one year	Rs. 15,000/-
Inner Center Spread (Colour) for one year	Rs. 20,000/-
Inner full page (B&W) for one year	Rs. 15,000/-
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Inner full page One Time (B&W)	Rs. 2000/-
Inner half page One Time (B&W)	Rs. 1500/-

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Date of Publication: 24-09-2015

Total pages 56

EDITORIAL

Wild Life Week in India - Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2 October 1869. Mahatma Gandhi was the first to apply nonviolence in the political field on a large scale and achieved independence for our country. The concept of nonviolence is the personal practice of being harmless to self and others under every condition. It comes from the belief that hurting people, animals or the environment is unnecessary to achieve an outcome. Mahatma Gandhi regarded human being as a trustee of all creations and once said a society can be judge by the way it treats its animals. Wild life week in India is observed in the first week of October because Mahatma Gandhi who was a staunch supporter of nonviolence also was born in the first week of October. Therefore, in order to arouse a general awakening in the common man in favor of protection of wildlife, starting from 1952 the Indian Board of Wildlife decided to observe the Wildlife Week from October 2 - 8 every year coinciding with the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. It is most important for children to understand the means and purpose of celebrating the Wild Life Week. In this way we will be able to change the entire human mind towards the wild life conservation one day. To arrest the rapidly dwindling numbers of wild animals in the country the wild life week was

started and is celebrated every year. The Government of India has established an Indian Board of Wild Life which works to improve the awareness as well as the consciousness of the people towards the wildlife preservation. In the year 1972 the Wild life protection Act was enacted to save the wild animals and it was amended six times to make it more effective in protection of wild life. To save the wildlife, sanctuaries and national parks have been declared all across the country.

Throughout the Wild Life week, people of all ages learn from experts through the seminars, lectures as well as hands-on workshops in order to become more closure to the nature. Elocution, painting and essay writing competitions are held for children of different age groups to inculcate love towards wild life. Wildlife experts show the plan on how to manage wildlife alongside with the human progress, both of which are connected to each other on this earth, and are necessary for each other's survival as explained below.

A question arises as to why we should protect wild life. Can't we live without wild life? Yes it is impossible for human beings on this planet to live without wild life. Physicist Albert Einstein once said that "If the tiny Honey bees

disappeared off the surface of the globe then man would have only four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more food for humans, no more man, no more plants, no more animals,." This is just an example. Hence we have to protect wild animals in our own interest and not because of any kindness towards the wild animals, or because the wild animals are beautiful.

Some people say Wild animals are 'unpredictable' and 'dangerous', when, in fact, wild animals are predictable, and only get dangerous when they feel threatened or when they feel that they are being attacked by human beings. A tiger never kills in greed but man does it. Now you decide who is unpredictable and who is dangerous. Humans are much more dangerous and much more unpredictable than wild animals. Animals only attack when they feel threatened, or when their habitat is destroyed. But humans can be aggressive without any valid reason. Wild animals are not selfish but most humans are selfish. Wild animals can survive without humans at least hundred times better than what they are surviving today but human beings cannot survive even for a day without wild animals.

Our lives would be very much poorer without these varied forms that build up the balance in

nature. Wildlife preservation in fact implies active and planned wildlife management under which all forms of life would progress side by side with human progress, each in its own sphere of influence and utility and without any detriment to human interests.

Wild animals survive in forests and away from human habitations: but unfortunately our forests are shrinking and there are several reasons for the shrinking of forests. In fact in most of the cases Government is responsible for shrinking of forests. One example is enactment of "The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006". With the enactment of this Act thousands of hectares of Reserve forest land was given for non-forestry purposes in most of the states. Forest Conservation Act 1980 and Wild life Protection Act 1972 have become ineffective due to enactment of the above Act. This will not serve any purpose except causing severe damage to the environment. Reserved Forests are declared after settling all the rights of the claimants and when all rights vest with the Government. With the enactment of the above Act Government is unsettling the once settled rights, which in turn is not only damaging our wild life but also causing damage to human beings.

Tiger is not only a beautiful animal but it is also the indicator of the forest's health. Tiger cannot live in places where forests have vanished. If we want tigers to survive, we have to make sure that the deer, the antelope and other smaller animals that the tiger needs as food thrive and flourish in these forests. To make sure that these herbivores live, we must make sure that all the trees, grasses and other flora that these prey animals need as food are protected. In this way, the whole forest gets saved! Saving the tiger means, saving the entire ecosystem. The tiger thus becomes the symbol for the protection of all species on our earth since it is at the top of the food chain. This is why we sometimes call the tiger, an apex predator, and an indicator of our ecosystem's health.

A century ago an estimated 40000 tigers roamed around India's forests. When their numbers declined steadily, the Government of India started Project Tiger in the year 1973 to save our

wild animals. As a result the number of tigers started increasing but again started declining. It is said that today the number of wild tigers in our country is not more than 2200. Mahatma Gandhi once sarcastically said that "Wild life is decreasing in the jungles but it is increasing in the towns." This has got dual meaning. One is wild life is decreasing in forest and second is man is turning like an animal and killing wild animals without any valid purpose. Wildlife experts say tigers are facing increasing threats to their roaming territory as their traditional forests were being cleared to make way for huge power projects, roads and human habitations. Forests are being felled for bringing the land under plough as the country's population has increased many folds .

Vana Premi wishes that this year's Wild Life Week is observed by all with good intentions to protect our forests & wild life which in turn will save the environment. **QMK**

Confidence and Hard work is the Best Medicine to Kill the Disease Called Failure. It will Make You Successful Person..... - Abdul Kalam

One best book is equal to hundred good friends but one good friend is equal to a library.
- Abdul Kalam

LETTERS TO EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for your gesture in sending me the copies of your esteemed magazine 'Vana Premi' from April, 2015 to August, 2015 by post. This appears to be in response to my complaint with Dr. B.R. Desai, Karnataka about non-receipt of VP in spite of my subscription.

There are appreciations heard here about the color combination & get-up of cover pages of VP in latest issues. I compared the issue of June, 2014 with June, July, 2015 of VP and found a lot of technical improvement in color and getup of cover pages.... congratulations for the same.

The Article 'Doesn't India Need a Land Policy' by JV Sharma, in August, 2015 attracted me very much and it is worth reading for those who love to conserve forests and forest lands. Sri Sharmaji's articles on forest conservation issues are worth preserving and reading by the new gen, forest officers of India. I want the VP to publish the outcome of the 'Study for Forest Improvement' initiated by AFROs T&AP as per VP, June, 2015 as it is worth to follow by other states.

With regards

Yours Sincerely

B.M.T. Rajeev,

Dear Editor,

I am enamored by the article "Democracy and Leadership" by Sri J. V. Sharma, in July 2015 edition of Vana Premi. In spite of not being a law-man (which I am one) his incisive analysis, objective interpretation and lucid narration are unique and exemplary. I had become his fan since many years. In fact he was my guide for my filing of the PIL in the High Court against the Tribal Act, which is now in the Supreme Court. All along I have been regularly reading his articles on varied subjects. His circumspection and prudence, restraint and moderation, understanding and accommodation are really superb. Degrees and Doctorates may bring appellations, but these need not bring wisdom.

Dictionaries, like law books, are never written. They are compiled. Compiling is a more strenuous job than authoring any literary piece, because in a literary work, the author has the liberty to use his own vocabulary, which freedom is not available in dictionary work. This requires a thorough knowledge of the languages involved. The task involved in this is tedious in arranging the words in alphabetical order and selecting the synonymous words in the other language. Both tasks are very strenuous and time-consuming. If the dictionary comprises of three languages, the task is tripled. Very rarely persons venture into this task. Rev. Father Kittel compiled a dictionary for Kannada in the last century or so. Late D. K. Bharadwaj of Gadag compiled an English-Kannada dictionary in 1944. None of these have been replicated so far. The enormity of the task involved in creating an original work is evident from this point alone.

Here is a voluminous dictionary brought out by our colleague forester, Dr. Raghotham Rao Desai. A forester and a trilingual dictionary are very strange combinations indeed, because foresters are normally

far away from literary pursuits. This is more so because Urdu is a distant language for a Kannadigas. Born in a remote village in Raichur District, which was then a part of erstwhile Hyderabad State, his grandfather was a high officer of that State. His father was a practicing Advocate and a senior colleague of our former Prime Minister, late Sri P.V. Narsimha Rao in Warangal, where Dr. Rao had his primary education in Urdu. The Nizam had imposed Urdu as the State language in the predominantly Telugu region, just as the Britishers imposed / introduced English in the rest of India. Dr. Rao had his degree from Osmania University, Hyderabad. He was selected as a Ranger from Hyderabad State and allotted to Karnataka soon after returning from training in S.F.R.C. in 1956. He got selected to I.F.S. and then to selection grade and retired in 1993, and has now settled in Bangalore.

Having come from a lineage of educated ancestors, his literary fervor and his penchant for acquiring more knowledge made him obtain his M. Com., M.A. in Urdu, and then Ph.D. in Urdu literature, all after retirement. He had no formal education in Kannada at any time. It has taken seven years for him and several visits to Delhi, where the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language is situated and who published this wonderful and voluminous product of Trilingual Dictionary. In this the Urdu words are followed by their pronunciation in English and Kannada and their meanings in both languages. Dictionaries are compiled once in a century and this work cannot be replicated in future because proficiency and mastery in all the three languages are required, which combination is not easy to emerge. This work will remain unparalleled for another century. If he minds it he can compile another such trilingual dictionary in Urdu-English-Telugu, because he is equally proficient in Telugu language and literature.

This book was released in a befitting ceremony in Bangalore on 18-08-2015 by the Minister, Sri Qamarul Islam, in the presence of the Director of Urdu Council, Delhi and a large gathering. Dr. Desai, we foresters, as a fraternity, is legitimately proud of you. May many more such rare works flow from your pen.

It is a happy augur that your journal – no, no, our journal – is being enriched and embellished by the versatile and prolific writers like Sri Sharma, Sri S. B. Singh, Sri Kamal Naidu, Sri S. D. Mukherjee, Sri V. V. Hari prasad and many more. Congratulations.

Yours faithfully,

S. S. Joshy,

Dear Qamar,

I am attaching this extract from my book, for wildlife special issue of your magazine. These are factual observation made at Pechuru from a hideout in 1965 onwards when hideout got made by RO Pechuru Mr. Pullayya. It was more comfortable than Rest house at Pechuru. Observations made were recorded by me which had been included in book almost verbatim. Forest officers should do like a pastime when on tours. I hope my effort would make young officers do likewise.

Yours sincerely

M. Kamal Naidu

NANDINI, TIGRESS OF NALLAMALAI

By

M. Kamal Naidu

It was in the midst the charismatic, fascinating hill ranges and deep valleys of the enchanting Nallamalais, which provides a picturesque view of the flora and the fauna of the Deccan Plateau, in Central India, when a very loud roar reverberated through the jungle, emanating from Her Majesty Tigress Nandini, the monarch of these parts. This sound froze and silenced all the creatures, asking them to pay heed to Her Majesty announcing the birth of her little noble ones. The cubs were born during the serene hours of the night, a little past mid-night, astrologically when '*Swati nakshatra*' prevailed. It was in the very early cool hours of March morning, when the dawn was to set much earlier than the recent past winter days, which was nature's creation in all its finesse. Here nature is at its best; untouched and un-spoilt. The places, the hills, the valleys, the streams, the pools, the tracks and trails, and everything about radiated a Divine beauty, and a Divine fragrance which emanated from the most revered Srisailam Shiva Temple, a '*Jyothi Linga*' set amidst it. These thrills have to be experienced to be believed. '*Vasanta*'! Spring is in the air, gently, softly caressing the lush green meadows, the dense woods, and the dark green forest. Everywhere it is fresh and new. The Dawn is about to break.

The shroud of darkness was lifting. There is a pleasant coolness in the early morning breeze. The winds scattered the Divine whispers among the newborn leaves. Whispers! Pristine in their melody; restarting every morning in an eternal quest of the finite to become a part of the Infinity. Whispers, rhythmically exciting, and melodically imaginative sounds ever conceived; which awakens the wild birds and other denizen, to join in welcoming '*Surya*' (Sun), the rising monarch on the eastern horizon with divine '*Suprabatham*'.

The eastern horizon soon brightened to a murky ruby. Purple gradually turned red, and to pale lemon. The large orange '*Surya*' emerged from beyond the hill ranges on his majestic chariot, drawn by the seven horses, to startle the darkness into dawn, to fulfill the earth's constant prayer "*Tamaso ma Jyothir gamaya*" (Lead me from darkness to light).

Gradually the whole sky is powdery blue; the shell pink thin clouds change to smooth lemon and white. The soft morning mellow sunlight filtering through the branches and leaves awakens everything to a new day.

It was the gayest moment, when the most

melodious sounds originate in the wild nature. The morning melodies, the calls, and the screams are an eclectic mix of Indian classical, the jazz, the rock, the quwali, the folk and a whole lot of other musical numbers.

Many denizens greet the dawn, while many wake up to perform their daily '*Sandhya vandanam*' (welcoming dawn rituals).

The day's performance starts with the plaintive soloist, a classical recital by the *Shama*, renowned top songsters of the avian world. It warbles its trembling, trilling ecstasy from the top most point of the tallest leafless trees. It was a solo on the flute, to the accompaniment of the winds playing on the strings of their violin, producing the most mellifluous divine music in '*raag bhairavi*' at the celestial hour. The great horned owl bids goodbye to the night with his last husky '*Whoo, Whoo*' call, before retreating to his dark abode.

Once the Divine music got started, the crested bulbuls join to enliven it with its soft and distinct, light cheerful whistles. Soon the entire moods in the jungle ranged from softly sentimental to almost boisterous swinging, when others joined the dawn chorus with melodious and not so melodious voices, where many were not bothered about melody, made exuberant noises. The moments were elating; no one kept away from the jubilant celebration.

Everyone participated in the chorus and the orchestra, with their own contribution to welcome the morning as the happiest moment of the new day.

With the chorus underway, the morning birds chattered and screeched in the dew dipped morning freshness, amidst the shimmering shadows of the fragrant forests. The *koels*, like sopranos holding an extravaganza of lilting trill, welcomed the magnificent, captivating orange red majesty with maniacal "*Koo, Koo, Koo*" yodeling from different directions of the expansive jungle. The jungle rooster announced his presence with a shrill '*Kuck-kuo-kroo*', and the common tree pie gave out their wide ranging harsh metallic calls, from the higher reaches of the trees. It was not known whether these calls were a challenge to intruders in their territory, or just an exchange of greetings at the beginning of the new day? These calls were interrupted by the loud, mournful, strident "*Peow, Peow*" outpouring of peacocks from near and distant branches.

As the day progressed, the jungle reverberated with more and more varied sounds and calls joined in by yet many more varied denizens. However the *shama* continued pouring out their sweet, lilting music; where the '*ragas*' moved from one octave to another, filling the air with floods of trills and cadence. The never-

ending soulful renditions went on delightfully, and drowned the surroundings, while the birds gradually flew out of the verdant treetops in their different directions.

The orange-red bloom of *palas* in full bloom added color to the, otherwise drab leafless March canopies of the *teak*, *chiruman* and *nallamaddi*, virtually setting the forests shimmering as though it were in flames.

The langur after spending most of the early morning swinging, exhibiting incredible acrobatic skills in the trees, disappeared into the forest, buzzing their booming 'whoop-whoop' calls, announcing to all other members of the forest of a safe serene surrounding. The sambar honked amidst the shrill and continuous, lilting 'kree-kree-kree' background music of the cricket, which rented the air in all the directions.

The day advanced, sunlight descended in all its brightness from the sky. It lit up the jungle, with dramatic colors in all their brilliance; changing the canopies from early morning grey to different shades of green, with intermingling trees dabbed in red and yellow blossoms. The dew, collected like beads on the tips of drooping leaves sparkled with scintillating effect with the 'suryakiranas' (sunrays) falling upon them. The dew on the grass, weeds, the bushes and the widely spreading spider webs glittered, emanating flashes of lights like millions of

opalescent pearls. Wafting mist rose up from the dew soaked ground; creating an ethereal backdrop to the unfolding jungle drama.

The entire jungle was a fantasy fairyland, displaying sparkling lights, and divine orchestral music, heralding the arrival of the regal youngsters announced by Nandini.

On the far side to where Nandini denned, in the undergrowth bordering the gentle, crystal clear stream, several red jungle fowls scratched vigorously among the dead leaves for seeds and insects. Seeing them a confident red spur fowl strutted down to the stream, while the ever excitable, jubilant squirrels clamored among the trees, scolding and chattering, feasting on the berries, insects and the nuts.

The serenity of the morning was broken by the vociferous, flute voiced cackle of a pair of drongo. They were startled and frightened of something, while so a chital called. The deer too were nervous, looking frightfully in the direction of the commotion. The drongo's sudden chatter was enough indication of something unusual.

Nandini too looked out carefully at the drongos, fearing another large predator in the vicinity. The calls were indicative. She expected another tiger. She hoped not.

The drongos swooped down fanatically at the something they spotted. They were glittering,

blue-black reflections in the morning rays of the sun; attacking something hidden amidst the dense evergreen *vakkaya*. It could be a mongoose, a snake or even a larger carnivore. It could be anything. However, it was something to be concerned for Nandini, now that she has her cubs.

The suspense did not last too long.

A magnificent large panther stepped out of the dense foliage into the open. It was smooth and glossy, and blended well into the background. It was unconcerned with the irritable drongos, and their cackle.

Observations from the hide after few days

Each day they discovered more interesting things in their surroundings, and its limitless denizens, and their mysterious ways. The cubs saw the forests as a complicated tangle of intermingling trees, climbers, shrubs, grasses and weeds of different species of distinctive shape, color and texture in a perpetual quest for dominance and survival. Despite the struggles, they saw a commonness traverse through the whole spectrum; where the creepers and lianas interwove and synchronized, linking and interlacing it into a perfectly harmonized '*Web of Life*'.

They saw the widely dispersed *mohwa*, dressed in the most pleasing mantle of new leaves, exuding an inviting aroma, permeating through

the forest. They drew a multitude of birds, the bees, the deer and the bear for their cool shade, and also to feast on their intoxicating fleshy flowers, fallen to the ground.

Strange activities drew their closer scrutiny. The husky seductive chant of a turtle dove caught their attention. Its call varied in moods ranging from anger to abject love; curiously amusing, delightful and fascinating. The male vocalized his love with an endeavor to entice his stubborn proud lady; he bowed, stiffened, and supplicated to her. The cubs were too young to understand the serenading. Despite strenuous efforts by the male, she was indifferent.

While the doves courted on the tree, an arrogant crow pheasant strode nearby. Its confident demeanor was frightening. They wished their mother was around. It suddenly gave out a vibrant, booming '*Boop-Boop*' call, which sounded frightful at such close quarters. This call reverberated into the valley, and was immediately responded by members of its own kind. The cubs tried to distinguish the call from the familiar '*Whoop-Whoop*' calls of the langur. The cubs were yet unaware of the need to maintain stillness. The crow pheasant noticed the cubs. It immediately ran and took off with heavy beating of wings, was out of their sight.

Just as the crow pheasant took off, a hoopoe descended on the scene not aware of the cubs

in the vicinity. It immediately got pecking into the earth with its thin long beak in several places, with deep concentration. With each probe it got something to eat, proving itself an excellent prospector. It was frisky and jerky, never remained still at a place. It frequently took off and landed between feeding, displaying an attractive brilliantly-colored crest feathers.

When engrossed with the hoopoe there was a loud screechy call. The cubs peered towards the sound and saw a partridge stepping out from the edge of the bushes into the opening. He stopped and surveyed the surroundings between the forest edge and the stream, giving out loud challenging "*Kee-Kok, Kee-Kok, Kee-Kok*" calls. He was accompanied by a coy female. The pair went towards the shallow limpid pool in the stream, dipped their beaks into the refreshing water, and took frequent long sips, before disappearing into the dense undergrowth.

As the partridges were refreshing, a sprightly grey jungle fowl arrived cackling vociferously, a fighting "*Kuck-Karaya-Kack*" call. He had no rival to challenge, yet gave his threat as a matter of routine. A peacock, descended from a *peepal* tree, and was joined by three females, a mother and two almost adult chicks. Seeing the gathering, a pair of red-spur fowls joined in. Some of these drank water, while others just preened themselves in the open.

The cubs saw an Oriole dazzling with bright yellow plumage in the branches, when a tiny sunbird whizzed like flashes of fire, with a vivid scarlet-red throat, spangled against its midnight blue-black feathers. It chirped a tuneless shrill '*Tweet, Tweet*' while consuming nectar offered by the blooming *loranthus*.

A green, crimson-breasted coppersmith, often heard but never could be seen, called out from a hole in the nearby *burugu*, announcing pathetically the approach of summer. The *burugu* was leafless, but a gorgeous sight. Its large crimson flowers invited the nectarine birds and the bees, offering them a delightfully serving of nectar. Taking advantage of the situation, a small green bee-eater perched on a branch sallied to swap at the bees, and other insects visiting the flowers. The cubs began understanding the intricacies of cooperation and inter-dependence in nature.

While so engrossed at the happenings around them, the cubs got startled by a clamorous '*Did you do it; did you do it*' alarm call from a red-wattled lapwing. The cubs wondered why the sudden commotion? The birds circled around, giving out repeated infernal calls, and dived noisily, darting at something moving flush to the ground in rapid spurts, now and then raising its head to look around. It was a mongoose. The

female lapwing landed temptingly close to the mongoose, with an intention to attract its attention, to divert it away from the nest. Upon each landing it pretended to look forlorn, but was very alert. The mongoose seemed to have understood and ignored it. The male continued his terrifying vociferous attacks. In the midst of this humdrum, the female flew to its nest, picked up the tiny mass of flesh, and flew the chick away for safety. Just as this drama was being enacted on the expansive stage, a hawk floating aimlessly in the sky swooped down, and snatched something in its claws from the grassy floor, and soared back into the sky. The victim dangled and struggled helplessly in its claws. Seeing this, another hawk chased after it, to snatch away the possession. In the midst of the chase, the prey in a bid to escape, struggled and dropped out of the predators clutches. The colorful trinket snake dropped dead.

Whilst these activities progressed to the cubs never ceasing excitement, the vociferous squirrels frisked mischievously, vigorously chasing one another, racing up and down the trees, and their branches, chattering and chirruping ceaselessly in a virtual hide and seek. Some were silent and busy gathering large bundles of floss, dehisced from the *burugu* tree, and others foraged incessantly for the luscious

fruits of *tendu* and *sarapappu*, and an occasional insect.

The cubs were excited at all the merriment and activities, so were stimulated to make a move, to begin their own play. The squirrels noticed them and ceased performing their antics; and instead protested loudly, abusing and scolding them from all directions; to show disapproval at intrusion in their midst. The cubs did not understand these protests, and ruled it out as mere jabbering by the noisy creatures.

As the cubs passed beneath a tree, the non-stop screeches by the cricket suddenly stopped. They became absolutely silent. It was a sudden calm. This calm was more frightful than the noisy din they were so accustomed from their birth. The cubs did not notice the crickets on the tree trunk. They always heard but had never seen them. They only saw the flaking bark on the tree. These suddenly squirted a spray of minute droplets in unison at the cubs. The cubs were taken aback, and realized the flaky bark were the crickets. They did not understand why they did so. They believed it to be an expression of their resentment; or just to conceal behind the misty gauze. The spray drifted in the wind, and the tiny droplets dazzled a spectacular fluttering rainbow.

MANAGEMENT OF ELEPHANTS- WILD AND DOMESTICATED

By

R. S. Bhadauria

Elephant has been synonymous with Indian society and culture since times immemorial through religion, mythology and history. Its size, strength, intelligence, capacity to learn, faithfulness and overall usefulness to mankind in most difficult situations & tasks performed, elevated it to the status of semi God and this is why in *vedic* religion it is believed to be the mount (*vahana*) of Deity king- *Indra* and also worshiped as Elephant God (Ganesh ji) *the bearer of good fortune and remover of obstacles*. Rerecorded history provides evidence that it has served man in war and peace, equally well. Domesticated elephant is so friendly, obedient and loyal to its master that it has earned reverence which in fact is ingrained in Indian Psyche. For this reason it is treated & looked after extremely well by the owners, much better than other domesticated animals. No domesticated animal can match an elephant in loyalty and trustworthiness to the extent that even a child can play with it safely and it fondles with children, even lifting them on its trunk to ride on its back. It performs unbelievable tasks with its trunk and trained elephants have been seen to write on the blackboard the sum of given digits with chalk stick, clutched in the trunk.

Owing to these unique characteristics, the

elephant has been kept, tamed, reared and bred like a domestic cattle since even prior to Vedic times. It has been accorded highest status and respect amongst all domestic animals, and degree of care taken in its upkeep can be gauged from the fact that a whole time skilled attendant known as *Mahawat* is engaged for every individual animal. Since its up keep is costly, it is owned by only select few, economically well off, who can afford its maintenance cost.

Elephant & its usefulness: Elephant's utility is manifold. During ancient times it was the mightiest force under human control and as such was used as war machine in battles. Till recent past, besides serving as prestigious mount for rulers and elites of society, it was used in inaccessible forests for log extraction also. However in the preset times elephants are still being used in following areas of human activities.

1- Inhabitants of heavy rainfall areas like N.E, North Bihar and Eastern U.P. where floods render villages inaccessible during rains, use elephants for mobility otherwise even during emergencies, they cannot move out to avail help from outside. Rich and prosperous farmers

keep elephants to meet such exigencies and they can afford its upkeep as sugarcane- the staple fodder, is a common crop in such areas.

2- Forest depts. across the country require this animal as a mount for tourists, visiting National Parks and Sanctuaries. Domesticated elephants are also required for managing (tranquilizing and trapping) aberrant big cats like Tigers, Lions, Leopards and also wild Elephants and Rhinos etc.

3- Even for inspections inside forests, elephant is the best mode of travel because it can negotiate all kinds of terrain- even water courses and ensures safety from all kinds of dangers in the forest. For this reason in many states elephants were provided in Forest Divisions by the Govt.

4- Temples and *Muths* keep elephants, because of religious consideration. Priests use them for religious ceremonies and processions where people shower offerings and feed the elephant which symbolizes God- Ganesh ji. This faith is ingrained in Hindu psyche which is difficult to erase, and in fact it is largely responsible for its conservation also.

5- Zoos keep elephants as an exhibit because visitors want to see this amazing creation of nature which by size is the biggest land mammal and most fascinating and queer looking amongst all animals.

6—Of late through trials, elephants have been found very useful in detecting hidden land mines in battle beleaguered areas. This new found

utility may increase its demand by military for clearing land mines.

Because of aforesaid utilities, demand for domestication of elephants will continue to remain in vogue for all times to come. Female elephants when allowed to pair breed and supplement the captive population.

Wrong Classification: 1—Domesticated or pet elephants live under full human control, care and constant companionship of man and yet, erroneously have been classified as Wild Animals under the Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972. Due to this erroneous decision, management of such elephants has come under dual control— Govt. and the owner. Consequently the owner, under obligation of the Act, started feeling harassed resulting in to disaffection and alienation from his prized possession leading to slow death of age- old friendly relationship between man and the elephant. In my opinion this hard earned relationship should be preserved and protected for the mutual benefit of both man and the elephant.

2—As a matter of fact, animals should be classified as wild or domesticated (Cattle) based on their behavior towards man, rather than their anatomy. It is an undeniable fact that a trained, pet elephant remains under full human control obeying his commands more faithfully than any other cattle class of animals. It shuns all its wild behavior and becomes so tame that even a

child can fondle with it, whereas a child cannot take that liberty even with other cattle like buffaloes and cows.

3— If a trained and pet, domesticated elephant is classed as Wild animal then what is the dividing line between a wild animal and cattle? Wild camels, horses, buffaloes and pigs also look like their counterpart cattle and belong to same families and genus. Trained elephant can accomplish such extraordinary tasks that no other pet animal or cattle can. In fact its brain power is so much developed that it stands between man and other animals.

4—All cattle spp. have descended from their wild ancestors which were somehow caught and tamed by ancient man. Even we civilized human beings have descended from wild ancestors and even now wild humans (no man made law is applicable on them) exist in Andaman & Nicobar islands who are similar to us anatomically, Therefore if a trained domesticated elephant is a wild spp. then we also deserve to be classed as wild animal.

Because of these and many other reasons, pet and domesticated elephant should not be classified as Wild animal.

Consequences of wrong classification: 1— After several years of the promulgation of the Wild Life Protection Act 1972, the domesticated population of elephants also came to be treated as Wild Animal. Consequently registration of domesticated elephants was made mandatory

and as such large numbers of elephants were registered by Chief Wild Wardens of the states. Recently retrieval of such elephants from the owners by force has started, compelling the owners to surrender them. The Surrendered elephants have to be kept and looked after as captive animals and for this purpose, rescue centers started coming up. By doing so, on one hand the owners feel harassed & resent forcible surrender while on the other huge and unnecessary expenditure is being committed .by way of constructing rescue centers and then bearing high cost of their up upkeep. Whatever may be the claim but the life of an elephant in a rescue center will be practically like a condemned **prisoner** for whole life, for no conservation gain. Captive life of elephants in rescue centers under employed hands will be much worse than their life with their owners who care for them like their own children.

2— Moreover, rescue centers are meant to be a temporary shelter for captured animals in distress— orphaned, abandoned .injured or sick, and such rescued animals after treating and ensuring their fitness, are either released back in to forest or kept in any zoo as exhibit. Thus rescue center is not a permanent captive facility like a zoo and therefore not meant to keep wrongly confiscated elephants, whose longevity will prove a huge burden on the so called rescue center. However, if any elephant owner offers to part with his possession, such elephant should either be kept in a zoo or sent

to some National Park or Sanctuary for riding purpose. But in no case, privately run rescue center be allowed to operate otherwise it is becoming a business, abusing the very concept of rescue center

3—If we analyze the pros and cons of the whole exercise of bringing the domesticated elephants under Wild Life Protection Act, it will be seen that it is an exercise in futility without any gain and on the contrary it is adding to the woes of elephant as well as the Govt. Because of religious sentiments, elephants were rarely shot even when shooting was allowed. After the ban on shooting and their capture from forests, for purposes narrated above, wild population has increased so sharply (above 30,000 nos.) that it has gone beyond the carrying capacity of their natural habitats with the result that elephants have started raiding crops and human habitations, increasing man –animal conflict to an alarming level. Crops are being destroyed, farmers are getting killed and Govt. is paying huge amounts as compensation, but there is growing resentment against this kind of conservation. To cap it all retrieving and confiscating privately owned elephants is going to add salt to the injury.

Suggested Management; As a matter of fact serious thinking is required on the subject to solve twin problem of capping wild population at optimum level and managing private ownership of elephants, for which my

suggestions are as under:-

All elephant bearing forest areas in the country are now overpopulated with this spp. In fact wild elephants have become menace not only to nearby villages but have become a management problem for Forest depts. as well. Scores of people are killed or injured every year and immense damage is caused to crops and properties by marauding herds of elephants for which state Forest depts. are paying compensation worth crores of rupees. Since elephants cannot be opened for shooting, their wild population will keep on increasing, posing threat even to their habitat (Forests) because while foraging, they damage/destroy fodder trees and devastate forests also. Zimbabwe in Africa faced such a situation in Eighties and they had to use Air Force to machine- gun the herds of elephants from the air to save their forests. Following measures are suggested to avert such situation.

1—Since culling of elephants by shooting is neither desirable nor practical, capture of young ones as before should be allowed to feed the demand in a fore said utility areas. This exit route for surplus elephants in the forest should remain open otherwise ever increasing wild population will meet the same fate as it did in Zimbabwe.

2—When domestic demand in aforesaid areas gets saturated, export of baby elephants be

allowed to zoos abroad, where there is great demand for this animal. In absence of Indian elephants, African elephant has stolen the markets abroad but Indian elephant is still preferred due to its better domestication ability. By doing so their wild population can be controlled as well as foreign exchange will be earned, which can be used for welfare of wild life in general and elephants in particular.

3—Domesticated elephants whether with private owners or with Govt. dept. (Forest depts. and Zoos) should be beyond the purview of Wild Life Protection Act, because its behavior is completely changed and unlike a wild animal, it behaves like a pet and friendly animal.

4—The ingenuity and courage with which our ancestors tamed and trained the biggest, the mightiest and fearsome land animal, cannot be imagined and this hard earned art & science, will be lost if we continue to sacrifice the breed of domesticated elephants on the altar of Wild Life (Preservation) Act.

5— If domesticated elephants vanish, future generations will be deprived of even seeing an elephant, because everybody cannot afford to go to see wild elephants in far off forest areas. The hard liners on this issue forget that they are trying to wreck the age-old relationship developed between man and elephant, which stood in good stead not only in times of peace

but also in wars, and is unparalleled in the entire animal kingdom

6—Last but not the least, withdrawal of elephants from the company of man will hurt the religious sentiment of large section of the society, which worships this animal as part of deeply ingrained faith.

7—Wild life should not be managed on sentimental grounds ,instead it should be managed based on ground realities, keeping in mind the carrying capacity of forest areas, otherwise blind preservation will trigger man and animal conflict and hard earned public sympathy will turn in to hostility and will prove counterproductive. The easiest, safest and time tested method is to exclude domesticated elephants from the ambit of Wild Life (protection) Act 1972 and let the capture and domestication of surplus population be allowed for purposes detailed above.

8—Now having crossed the carrying capacity limits of Elephant Habitats in the country, the emphasis on its Preservation only should shift to its future long term Conservation Strategies, in harmony with nature and human population. With strict laws in place, even with rare cases of poaching, elephant population is not going to be decimated, instead it has to be controlled and stabilized to avert ever increasing Man & Elephant conflict.

CECIL – AN OBITUARY

By
Chinmay K. Mishra

You had your shining moments,
upon this life's darkened stage
and in my book of wonderments
you'll never be just another page.

Said by Megan R. Bokowski in "The Drifter's Melody"

On 1st July 2015, Cecil the most beloved, charismatic and celebrated South African Lion (*Panthera leo bleyenberghi*, one of the seven sub-species of African lions), living in the Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe was ghastly murdered at the hands of an American big pocket, a dentist named Walter James Palmer of Minnesota. Named after Cecil Rhodes, the British founder of Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, Cecil was a majestic Lion with its blackish mane, widely photographed by the tourists' world over, and widely studied by the wild lifers and scientists contributing to wealth of data on the habitat, predation, home range, survival and population dynamics of its peers; about 32,000 surviving in the Sub-Saharan Africa. Cecil was almost a nationalized Lion of Zimbabwe, but the state sacrificed it for \$50,000. Walter James palmer has been a habitual hunter and is known to be hunting wild animals in Africa for the last several years.

Cecil was born in 2002. Like all cubs, he would have spent his first two months hidden away by his mother from predators and other lions. But when his brown spots and gray coat would just

have started turning gold, his mother would have introduced him to the pride. Most lion family groups consist of five related lionesses, several young cubs, and the dominant males. Cecil probably ate a lot of buffalo, wildebeest, zebra and even young elephants together with his family members in the Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe.

By lion standards, Cecil was terribly lucky. It is estimated that 67 percent of African lion cubs don't reach adulthood. They die by starvation, disease, and infanticide perpetrated when new male lions take over a pride. As one of the lucky cubs, Cecil would have started to roar by his first birthday. By the time he was 3 years old and growing out his mane, the dominant males would have kicked him out of the pride.

For the next couple of years, Cecil likely roamed with his brothers and other young males until, banding together, they took over their own pride. Not that Cecil's life was dull after winning a pride. He would have had to regularly mark his territory by spraying urine, scuff-marking, and roaring loudly. He always had to be ready to fight with rival males. And his marital duties would have been terribly time-consuming: For every cub that survives to one year, its parents have to copulate approximately 3,000 times. When he was 6 years old, Cecil was caught and fitted with a tracking collar. He had just been enrolled in a major lion study conducted by biologists Andrew Loveridge and David

MacDonald of the Oxford University. Over the next seven years Cecil's movement was tracked by satellite through the radio collar. By knowing the movement of Cecil the scientists could infer that the lions mostly preyed upon buffaloes when they were close to water holes. They found that Zebras ate low quality diet when they lived close to lions. The scientists got valuable data about lion – human conflict and tried to resolve these, hopefully to avoid it. They also studied the movement of lions between Hwange and other national parks along with how these lion corridors might intersect between expanding human populations.

While Cecil has died, these scientists' efforts continue, buoyed by the hope that they can protect Cecil's disappearing species. The University and Conservation groups that fund Loveridge and Macdonald's ongoing study are asking for donations to help learn more about lions. I can only hope that, by understanding Cecil's life and grieving his death, we can better protect these magnificent cats. (Source – Megan Cartwright, 2015, Mass Media Fellow with the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a Ph.D. candidate in toxicology at the University of Washington.)

Interestingly after Cecil's death the cubs in the pride are thriving under another pride leader Jericho, known to be the brother of Cecil and now the rearing uncle for the cubs. Opinion of the scientists varies whether Jericho is the real brother of Cecil or not. However adopting Cecil's cubs in distress shows great deal of social behavior among the lions.

The Lion as a species was once widely distributed from India to Arabian Peninsula up to Turkey, the whole of Africa excepting the Sahara deserts and the Congo basin. The present home range has been reduced to the forests of few countries like South Africa, Kenya, Namibia, Tanzania, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Out of four species of lions, *Panthera leo nubica* and *Panthera leo melanochaita* have been extinct. *Panthera leo persica* (Asiatic lion) and *Panthera leo leo* (African lion) are surviving. Scientists have divided the African lion into seven subspecies depending on their habitat. There has been a decline of Lion population by 30 percent in the last twenty years. African Serengeti provides a vast and interesting field of study to the wild lifers the world over. Many species of wildlife has been radio collared. The exact number of radio collared lions in these countries is unknown; their number may not exceed several dozen. In this back ground the murder of Cecil, a radio collared lion, being watched by the world scientific community, was bound to create outrage in the conservation community. Cecil wore a collar monitored by Conservation Research Unit of Oxford University. The group uses satellites to track more than 100 lions, and has monitored the lives of more than 500 individuals over time, according to its website. Wild CRU had tracked Cecil, who was 13 when he died, since 2008. His collar transmitted GPS data on his whereabouts that was uplinked to a satellite every hour. When scientists download this information, they use it to map a pride's territory and learn a lot about lion society. Lion location information also helps

balance conflicts between lions and humans, who sometimes poison the big cats to protect livestock, or who hunt them—legally or illegally. When a tracked lion moves outside a national park's boundary, conservationists can find out and warn hunters that it's illegal to shoot that specific animal. (It didn't happen in time to save Cecil in this case; he was allegedly lured out of Hwange National Park on purpose by guides who didn't know he was GPS-tracked.) Cecil's death made Jimmy Kimmel cry and threw the internet into an angry frenzy. But if any sliver of good can come out of it, researchers say, its science. Wild CRU points out that the beloved lion's death can shed new light on lion society.

When a dominant male is killed, other males in his coalition will be overthrown and their cubs will be killed, too. This means the lionesses will be able to mate again so that the new dominant lion can ensure the future of his own bloodline. Wild CRU will study how Cecil's death ripples through the pride and its neighbors. What's more, the immense public outcry over his death might spur people to donate money in Cecil's name, helping scientists learn more about his family and animals like him.

"Good can come from this if the world's attention can lead to support for our work to improve lion conservation—helping us buy satellite collars, maintain our field vehicles and train excellent young Zimbabwean conservationists," said David Macdonald, director of the Wild CRU and a professor at Oxford. "The modern world is a hostile place for large carnivores like lions. It will take all our ingenuity and determination to secure their conservation alongside the

development of local communities." (Source – Wild CRU, Oxford)

Trophy hunting vs Conservation, the

Debate: - The hunting of Lions and other big games is an old imperial habit. In India the Kings used to maintain game reserves for their pastime and hunting. Recently the Washington Post reported that American President Teddy Roosevelt trapped and killed 11,000 animals on a 1909 Safari in Africa. When the Europeans settled in the America, Australia and New Zealand they wantonly hunted down millions of big games. However Africa is unique. The remnants of the majestic wildlife species is still found in Africa, which is considered a living Pleistocene.

There is a lack of consensus among some conservation NGOs and African governments concerning the acceptability and effectiveness of trophy hunting as a conservation tool. This lack of consensus is due partly to a lack of reliable information on the economic significance and ecological impact of the industry. Trophy hunting occurs in 23 countries in Africa, with the largest industries occurring in southern Africa and Tanzania, where the industry is expanding. The trophy hunting industry has remained static or is shrinking in Central and West Africa. A minimum of 1,394,000 km² is used for trophy hunting in sub-Saharan Africa, which exceeds the area encompassed by national parks. Trophy hunting is thus of major importance to conservation in Africa by creating economic incentives for conservation over vast areas, including areas which may be unsuitable for alternative

wildlife-based land uses such as photographic ecotourism. However, there are a number of problems associated with the industry which limit conservation benefits. Several of these problems are common to multiple countries, suggesting that if solutions were developed, conservation benefits would accrue over large areas. (Lindsay et.al, 2007)

Advocates of African trophy hunting argue that Trophy hunting helps in Conservation of the species; that hunting revenue provides benefits to rural people living on the fringe villages of the national parks. "Hunters and hunting actually benefit Africa's Lions – as well as its humans. Revenues from hunting generate \$200 million annually in remote rural areas of Africa." (Rudolf and Hosmer, 2011) But the reality is different. The revenue figure seems to be exaggerated. Research and publication by many organizations including the F.A.O. finds that hunting companies contribute only 03 percent of their revenue to the people living in the fringe areas. In the context of National Economies the contribution of trophy hunting is a pittance. In the 09 African Countries studied (South Africa, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe) tourism contributes about 2.4 percent of G.D.P.; and out of this total tourism revenue only a pittance 1.4 percent is the revenue generated from trophy hunting. (Economist at large, 2013)

Even though the protected areas now cover 13 percent of the globe, the wildlife is under tremendous pressure, struggling for its survival against human invasion. The elephants are being rampantly poached for its ivory so that African elephants are likely to last at best another

decade. Same is the fate of the Rhinos that are hunted for its horn. Attempts to dehorn the Rhinos increased their infant mortality as the dehorned animals could not protect their infants from predation especially by the hyenas. Besides official trophy hunting an unknown number of animals are killed due to illegal poaching. The high resolution satellite imagery of Africa shows many wild reserves are now dotted with human settlements especially after the tse-tse eradication programme.

Conclusion: - The arguments that trophy hunting promotes conservation by providing finance to the people living in fringe areas of protected areas has no scientific basis. It appears to be propaganda by the hunting enterprises. The nature based wildlife tourism should be the goal of these countries. The communities living in fringe areas should be involved in ecotourism to guide the tourists only for sighting the animals and experiencing the wilderness; not for hunting. That will go a long way in wild life conservation. Regulated activity by the State can really augment the income of the rural communities living in fringe areas rather than the income of hunting industries. Lessons can be learnt from the Gir National Park, where the number of visitors now reaches few lakhs per annum. Several families in the fringe area are getting income from ecotourism. This can be replicated in Africa and trophy hunting should be banned for ever. Let the wild life be allowed to live as our co-passengers in the spaceship earth, in the face of rapid loss of biological diversity.

Good Bye – Cecil. You have aroused the conscience of the World to conserve your peers, and immortalized yourself. *Requiescat in pace*

ZOO TIGER'S LEAP INTO OPEN

By

G. Ravi and K.B.R. Reddy

Nehru Zoological Park with sylvan surroundings abutting the historical Mir Alam tank with an area of 380 Acres in Hyderabad city of Telangana state is a picturesque place and a tourist attraction. It was established in the year 1959 and opened to the public on October 6, 1963. It is pioneer in the country for creating natural conditions artificially. Nehru Zoological Park is the first Zoo in India to introduce open moat enclosures giving visitors a close look at the animals. It is also the first zoo to open an Animal Safari for Lions, Tigers, Bison and Sloth Bear. Arranged in Zoological order, the park has been divided into mammal, fish and bird zones. The Nocturnal Animal House, Butterfly Park, Aquarium, Natural History Museum and the Jurassic Park will take the visitors to a different world altogether. It is considered as the second best zoo in Asia. On an average, about 10,000 people visit the zoo each day and the number increases twofold or more on week-ends and public holidays.³²⁰.

The scheme of change of 'blood line' in breeding of tiger was suggested by the Central Zoo Authority, New Delhi. With a view to change 'blood line' in the NZP, a six year old male Royal Bengal Tiger, by name KADAMBA, was brought into the NZP on March 6, 2014 from Pillikula

Biological Park at Mangalore in Karnataka state and was kept in the LaCONES (Laboratory for Conservation of Endangered Species) area. This area is out-of-bounds to visitors.

In the afternoon of Saturday on 22nd August, 2015, Tiger Kadamba and a tigress by name KAREENA were shifted to newly constructed 'Delivery Room' in the LaCONES area. Kadamba leapt out a 10 ft. fence and came into open. After a few moments, he walked gently up to his night house, as it is his wont under the influence of a hormone called 'Pheromones'. The workers moving around there got frightened and locked themselves in a cage which was vacant at LaCONES. Tiger Kadamba walked down towards jaguar cage and got into a lane and sat there silently and peaceably.

Tiger Kadamba's escape from the Delivery Room by jumping over the fence occurred around 03.45 p.m. when thousands of visitors within the zoo elsewhere got panicky and started running helter skelter. It was a challenging task to control the mob and evacuate them to safety. The zoo staff pressed into service the battery operated vehicles. There was also timely police assistance to meet the challenge. The Zoo staff took utmost care

for evacuation of the visitors to avoid stampede by deploying all the available staff at the zoo exits.

Meanwhile the veterinary personnel were alerted to visit the scene at once to deal with the tiger. In a well-planned rescue operation, Kadamba was tranquilized by shots of Ketamine and xylazine. This way the tiger was recaptured by 04.30 p.m., and immediately antidote (Yohinbine hydrochloride) was also administered by Dr. Naveen Kumar retired Dy. Director NZP who arrived to the zoo by this time. The tiger gained full consciousness within about 30 minutes. Pain-killers were administered as a precautionary measure to reduce inflammatory pain.

The incident attracted the attention of media agencies; press people became agog and rushed to the Zoo for details. They were given the true picture of what happened. The zoo staff breathed a sigh of relief. They kept close watch on Kadamba's recovery following the tranquilization. The tiger recovered though in 30 minutes, the sedation effect from the ketamine

drug remained for about 36 hours. Kadamba has recovered completely in 2 days. He is back on his feet and ate his normal food of about 7 Kgs. of beef. The recovery of Kadamba has also been reported extensively in the press to the satisfaction of the public. The Police personnel under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner, Bahadurpura have rendered timely assistance and their help is acknowledged with gratitude.

A big establishment like the Nehru Zoological Park needs constant vigilance. Questionable characters and bad elements with ulterior motive are kept under surveillance and a watchful eye is kept on them. Even then undesirable and unforeseen events do occur either by negligence or by accident and each such incident are addressed promptly and its recurrence is avoided. It is truly said, prevention is better than cure. When prevention fails, curative measures become inevitable. In the present episode, the Zoo staff feels extremely happy at the calm and quiet behavior of Kadamba. All is well that ends well.

“Thinking should become your capital asset, no matter whatever ups and downs you come across in your life”.
- Abdul Kalam

When Mother is Happy Family is Happy, When Family is Happy Nation is Happy.
- Abdul Kalam

DISAGREEING WITH AGREED IS A STEP FORWARD TOWARDS PROGRESS (TIGER CONSERVATION IN INDIA)

By
B. M. T. Rajeev

India is a country; rich in biodiversity and wealth of wild animals. The carnivores like lion, tiger and leopards, small cats, dogs, lynxes, civets etc. and herbivores like elephant, rhino, bison and varieties of deer, antelopes, sheep & goats; birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes and insects etc. were all in plenty till they were subjected for unabated hunting as sports-game and then persecuted for trade in their body parts in the international markets from the mid of 18th century till the establishment of Indian Board of Wildlife (IBWL) in 1952.

Project Tiger: The IBWL initiated all measures to control the indiscriminate hunting of wild animals threatened in India as identified by the IUCN (The International Union for Conservation of Nature) and banned the trade in animals articles in collaboration with the CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora) and finally succeeded in persuading the Government of India to enact the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Further, the IBWL and also forced the Gol to launch Project Tiger, 1973 for the conservation of our national animal-tiger, the representative of our ecosystem, by convincing the Gol about the decimation of tiger population from 1,40,000(1925), to 40,000(1930), to 30,000(1939)

to 4,000(1964) and to 1,872 (1972). Initially nine Tiger Reserves (TRs) were launched including the one in Karnataka-Bandipur TR.

The persecution of wild animals was brought under control with enactment of WLPA, 1972 and launch of Project Tiger, 1973; but, the fragmentation of their habitats-forests continued unabated due to diversion of forest lands for construction of major irrigation/hydroelectricity projects, expansion of agriculture, housing, mining, communication and for rehabilitation of repatriates from Pakistan due to partition of the country and also the displaced people from the submersion areas of the projects under taken till enactment of Indian Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

Success of PT: The Project Tiger got worldwide recognition as one of the best implemented project; and got better public appreciation when the tiger population went on increasing with the passage of time from 1,872(1972) to 3,015(1979), to 4,005(1984) to 4,334(1989).

To commemorate the launching of prestigious 'Project Tiger' and its success; the 20th anniversary was celebrated as '20th Project Tiger' with an International Symposium on Tiger Conservation in New Delhi in February, 1993.

Elaborate arrangements were made on the direction of the then the Minister of State for MoEF Sri Kamal Nath and supervision of the Secretary to Government, MoEF Sri Rajamani by the Director PT, Sri Arin Ghose.

All most all the Field Directors(FDs), Deputy Directors and Research Officers with one Range Forest Officer each from all the Tiger Reserves were invited for the function. I was serving as Research Officer, Bandipur TR(BTR) and had a chance to attend the function and the symposium.

It was attended by many dignitaries from different parts of the world including the representatives from the Big Cats Conservation Society USA and also from the Forest and Fisheries Dept. of the USA. The function was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Minister, MoEF and awards were given away to the officers, who rendered meritorious service in Tiger Reserves in the past. The team from BTR was in ecstasy as it bagged two awards; one gold medal for excellent service in controlling elephants poaching to Sri B. Natarajan, the then FD, BTR and one silver medal for Sri Kulla, FG- a Tribal, BTR for his alertness on patrolling in detecting an elephant poaching incidence & firing at 3 poachers that lead to arrest them in Kerala. It was a goody-goody occasion for all and a special one for Karnataka. Some sessions of symposium were also held in the afternoon. The Dinner was held in the Hotel Taj hosted by the GoI for the delegates.

Disagree with agreed: In the next day sessions were somewhat tough with some criticisms about the method of tiger census-based on the tiger pug marks tracing and molding with plaster of Parris powder by none-other than Dr. K. Ullas Karanth of Karnataka through his paper on 'Camera trap method of tiger census'. There was descending notes by all most all the Officers against the criticism of the technique of tiger pug mark tracing & counting. But, situation was tolerable. Mr. Valmiki Thapar, an NGO on tiger conservation and an accomplice of the then FD of the Sariska TR in Rajasthan was also disputing the tiger census figures projected at all India level. This was a bitter situation for all the authorities of Tiger Reserves in India. Then a situation aroused to cross check the figures with the past Field Director of the Sariska TR, Mr. Fathe Singh Rathod who was retired by then, but was very much present in the symposium. Mr. Fathe Singh Rathod clarified that the NGO was correct; on questioning, how he was giving the census figures in the past as FD for nearly 15 years; he said that there were less tigers in Sariska; but he was cooking the tiger pug marks and giving figures to keep with the trends of other Tiger Reserves and made all the other officers to feel bad. He had no an iota of shame or guilty in declaring the truth as he was retired and a free man working for the NGO Mr. Valmiki Thapar- fame of a documentary on tigers of Ranthambore TR.

Tiger population touched nadir: This disclosure of the cooking of tiger census figures

in Sariska TR and furnishing of wrong figures made the argument of the NGOs stronger to mount pressure on Gol to adopt the camera trap method of tiger census in TRs. The controversy on the tiger census figures led some NGOs to take up cross checking the figures of tiger population in the TRs identified to be susceptible for tiger poaching in north India. The controversy and the activism of NGOs, lead for cross checking of all the census figures; with this corrections in census and also due to the spurt in tiger poaching incidences in north and NE region of India connecting to Nepal, the tiger population started declining from 4,334(1989) to 3,750(1993) to 3,508(1997) and touched its nadir 1,411(2006). The NGOs proved that there were no tigers in good old Sariska TR and very less in Panna TR by 2006.

NTCA to Revive PT: This situation forced the Gol to amend the WLPA, 1972 in 2003 and 2006 and to setup the NTCA with strict monitoring methodologies to insure the safety of the existing tigers and their protection and conservation. Now, the tiger population is found to be on increase and stands at a figure of 2,226 as per 2014 tiger census with a network of more than forty Tiger Reserves.

Again the threat of fragmentation of the habitats is looming large with the enactment of Forest Rights Act, 2006 and increased mining activities and also the projects under taken by the governments for development of infrastructures, communications, industries, education, health, irrigation and housing etc.

India has achieved success in conservation of wildlife by bringing nearly 20 % of the forest areas under the network of Protected Area (PA) network, which comes to about 5% of the geographical area of the country; but it has no sufficient areas adjoining to the PAs for development of viable areas as buffers or for expansion of the habitats or for corridors to absorb the increased population of the wild animals especially tigers and elephants.

Ecological Successions affecting the carrying capacity of PAs: The wildlife management prescribes maintenance of habitats inviolate for the wildlife to flourish in nature. But, the present practice is a myth rather than reality due to many interwoven problems surfacing in wildlife management practices in PAs of India which are under strict management practices since 1970s. Most of the PAs' vegetation in the tropical deciduous forests, left to nature without interference or manipulation for more than 4 decades are under different stages of succession and some are nearing or at the stage of 'ecological climatic climax' the natural phenomena of any vegetation.

The climatic climax- is the culmination of any plant or vegetation in a given environment - a stage of grey condition. Whereas the wild animals are diverse in nature and they require diverse food, shelter and space to spread their gene.

According to the proven principles of wildlife management; only the forests/ habitats in diverse stages of succession-vegetation can

meet the diverse demands of the diverse wild animals and not the habitats in climatic climax condition. In addition to the natural phenomena- climatic climax, the exotic weeds like *Lantana camara*, *Eupatorium odoratum* and *Parthenium hysterophorus* and some of the local weeds like *Strobilanthes*, *Desmodium*, spp. *Indigofera* spp. Etc. have become menace in most of the deciduous habitats-PAs especially in Western Ghats and have occupied the forest floor leaving no scope for grasses to survive; causing dearth of fodder for herbivores and hindrance for the movement of all animals.

The resultant problems are – decline in the carrying capacity of such habitats due to fall in the production of grasses- fodder base for herbivores- the prey base of carnivores; causing herbivores like heavy feeders-elephants and other herbivores and wild boars to depredate in to agricultural fields. Some time, predators also follow the herbivores in to human habitations and both cause severe “human-animals’ conflicts”. The forests in climatic climax (CC) are also prone for devastating summer fires as they are like bombs in dormancy ever waiting for ignition.

Future of PAs in CC & infested with weeds:

The PAs which have attained the ecological climatic climax conditions have been left to nature without any plan for the revival of their carrying capacity as could be seen in parts of Bandipur TR, Nagarhole TR (NTR) and Biligiriranga Temple TR in Karnataka. It appears that the managements are hoping for some miracle to resolve the tragedy. The miracle can

be only fire.... and further occupation of the forest floor by the thick mat of exotic weeds enumerated above and none can predict the revival of the vegetation as described in the ecological succession- theories due to presence of monster weeds as it has already happened in the fire burnt areas where Bamboo flowered & dried in NTR and BTR in 2012 and 2014 respectively. If so is the future; why the management is silent without taking any action to revive the carrying capacity PAs? Millions of rupees are being spent for fire protection annually; why the same amount money not is spent for control of weeds and revival of carrying capacity of the PAs?

Evidence to prove decline in carrying capacity of the PAs in terms of herbivores:

If the government wants proof about the decline in carrying capacity of BTR & NTR, it should view the Kannada popular films shot in these PAs- Gandadagudi (1973), Hulihalinamevu (1977) Nagarhole (1970s) and also the Documentary on Radio collaring of tiger in NTR by Dr. K Ullas Karanth (1980s) and compare the fodder value of the places shot in the films with the present fodder value of such places with field visits to know and understand the decline in the carrying capacity of these PAs due to weeds in terms of herbivores.

A right cause on wrong footing: The Elephant Proof Trench (EPT) and lining to EPT at weak points to make it fool-proof to prevent the depredation of elephants/other animals in to farm land has been done along the boundary

between the PA and human habitations in the Nagarahole TR since 1990s. Now, a massive plan-Old Rail Fencing (ORF) has been planned & tried on experiment (A plan borrowed from Africa costing nearly Rs750 million per km) since the existing EPT is said to be ineffective to control crop depredation by elephants.

On keen observation (27.08.2015) it was found that EPT- 'A right action on wrong footing' from the beginning and it appears to be the reason for persistence of elephants' depredation to the crops. Here, the EPT allows the elephants to go out. If by accident some elephants slide in to the EPT, they can easily climb outside as it is difficult to re-climb the trench and its mound to re-enter the PA and hence, the persistence of crop depredations in Nagarahole TR.

The right technique should have been..... The EPT around PAs should be dug with trench inside the PA and the mound formation towards outside to prevent the animals going out of PA; the same principle is also followed in case of enclosures in zoos (Prevents animal from going out). If some animal slides in to trench, it will find it difficult to climb the trench and mound to go out and it will be forced to climb back to PA only. Whereas the EPT in NTR is with reverse technique which is quite similar to Cattle Proof Trenches (CPT) around plantations with trench outside and mound-inside parallel to the technique of moats around forts of old kingdoms (Prevents enemy entering inside).

It is important, that the techniques of massive projects have to be exposed for discussion/ criticism before execution to avoid heart burn after commitments.

Conclusion: It is time for the wildlife managers to plan strategies to create different stages of vegetation's, control weeds and develop fodder in addition to resolving man-animal conflicts with visualization that wildlife management is also responsible for creation of conditions conducive for wild animals in their habitats; which was neglected & left to nature so far with the assumption, manage the PAs undisturbed and nature will take care. How can nature maintain its purity in the present context of Global Warming and invading exotic weeds without assistance?

The wildlife authorities requires to conduct series of scientific seminars and debates by involving experts in the field of wildlife management/forests- in service/ retired, scientists, wildlife biologists, environmentalists and stake holders (who suffer due to man-animals conflicts) on the problems concerned to each PA to find out solutions to provide viable and sustainable habitats to wildlife as there is no chance to increase the areas of existing habitats on par with the increasing population of animals and also for resolving man-animals conflicts in the best interest of the wildlife, ecology and the future generation.

AS THE WORLD OBSERVES “TIGER DAY” ON 9TH OF AUGUST...

By

Dr. Raghotham Rao Desai

Future Conservationists who look back at the century just gone by may well regard it as the start of a revolutionary period in the history of man's attitude to wildlife. The life of an animal in the wild is at last coming to be regarded as of intrinsic value and not solely as an adjunct of man. This change is as startling in its own way as the change in man's attitude to the machine a couple of centuries ago. Just as some industries were slow to feel the effects of the industrial revolution, some species of wildlife are slow in coming under the influence of the Conservation revolution, partly on account of their geographic location. If one compares the amount of knowledge gained about the life history of some species, with the lack of hard information about the life of tigers in India, the discrepancy is startling: the tiger suffered to a large extent from the attitude of sportsmen who saw it merely as a potential trophy for their own aggrandizement, since wildlife of our forests was regarded as the prerogative of Indian princes until the commencement of II World war.

Immediately after we gained independence wildlife suffered a temporary setback due to its association with imperialism and, in the native states, with feudalistic repression. In 1952,

however, the Indian Board of Wild Life was set up, later paving the way for Project Tiger two decades after, and since then public opinion has gradually begun to support the idea that wildlife is worth saving. This is very much to India's credit when one appreciates the urgent necessity of finding ways of feeding the human population, a process which inevitably involves increasing the area of land under cultivation and reducing wildlife habitats.

We have been able to prevent the hunting of tiger for the thrill of the trophy and are slowly coming to know how it lives in the wild: because of which knowledge we are capable of conserving the species effectively to a great extent. Still, the tiger is suffering not only from a shrinking habitat but from diminishing members of its natural prey-species. When the interests of a wild animal bring it into conflict with man's interests it is the latter who becomes the successful predator!

The tiger has shown itself capable of adapting to a variety of habitats and to widely differing climates — a very welcome metamorphosis. No one can thus say that the tiger has not tried to meet changing conditions throughout its long history on the earth. It has been constantly

on the move, retreating before the advance of man, but how far can it go to escape the effects of human settlement? Its back is to the wall: the need of the hour is to discover the conditions that are essential to its mode of life — a great deal more needs to be done to prevent the tiger from succumbing to the man.

Indian tiger appears to be comparatively fortunate for not being exposed to any great extent of persecution resulting from superstitious fancy with regards to the alleged value of its various parts for medicinal purposes — this cult is said to be highly developed among the Malays and Chinese: as such the flesh is a remedy for debility, pills made from the eye-

balls are said to cure convulsions and blindness, the skin either burnt or roasted & mixed with water is a general cure for illness, the sexual parts are alleged to have aphrodisiac properties and the bones (chiefly of the head) are much prized by the Chinese as containing a soul substance or vital fluid, akin to that of a man.

The Indian faith in the value of the tiger's fat as a cure for rheumatism and the use of the clavicle, whiskers and claws as ornaments and lucky charms is shared by the Malays and Chinese. On this analogy alone there appears to be so much danger for the tiger in S.E. Asia. However, the tiger is held with awe, tinged with general respect in India — a minor solarium, though.

BREEDING OF PELICANS AND PAINTED STORKS IN KOLLERU SANCTUARY

The conservation efforts made by the forest department, Government of Andhra Pradesh by providing artificial stands for breeding purpose has brought back the Pelicans to great extent. The population of Pelicans has grown enormously. The excreta droppings are helping the fish growth. The birds are consuming more than 25 tones of fishes/day. Population of Pelicans and painted storks together are about 11,000 which consume on an average 2 kg of fish/day/bird. Especially they will consume more in breeding season to bring up their chicks. In future, there is a possibility of man-bird conflict for the fishery resources. (For example population of black buck at Rollapadu sanctuary increased more than the carrying capacity of area became dangerous for the lively hood of Locals and survival of Great Indian Bustard.) Hence, the water spread area should be maintained at +5 contours to sustain both birds and fishes as the local fishermen are depending on fishing for their livelihood. Further erection of artificial stands may be stopped and further breeding to be discouraged.

(Contributed by sri K. Mrutyumjaya

rao)

BIOSPHERE RESERVE AT THE LOTUS FEET OF THE LORD

By
V.V.HARIPRASAD

The government of India declared Seshachalam Hills as one of the biosphere reserves of India in 2010. **Sri Venkateshwara National Park** is a national park and the biosphere reserve in Andhra Pradesh, India. The National Park is located in Eastern Ghats spread over the Seshachalam hills of Y. S. R. Kadapa district and Tirumala hills of Chittoor district. The elevation varies from 150 to 1,130 m. The terrain is undulating with forest covered valleys. Most of the rainfall is received from the northeast monsoon and a little from the south west monsoon. The vegetation here is a mix of dry deciduous and moist deciduous types. Average rainfall in the region is 900 mm. The average temperature of the region varies from 12 °C to 44 °C.

Bio diversity in India: Before perceiving in detail about the flora and fauna of Seshachalam hills it is imperative that one has to have the basic perception on the biodiversity of India.

India has some of the world's most bio diverse regions. The boundaries of India encompass a wide range of eco zones—desert, high mountains, highlands, tropical and temperate forests, swamplands, plains, grasslands, areas

surrounding rivers, as well as island archipelago. It hosts 3 biodiversity hotspots: **the Western Ghats, the Himalayas and the Indo-Burma region**. These hotspots have numerous endemic species.

India, for the most part, lies within the Indo Malaya eco zone, with the upper reaches of the Himalayas forming part of the Palearctic eco zone; the contours of 2000 to 2500m are considered to be the altitudinal boundary between the Indo-Malayan and Palearctic zones. India displays significant biodiversity. One of eighteen mega diverse countries, it is home to 7.6% of all mammalian, 12.6% of all avian, 6.2% of all reptilian, 4.4% of all amphibian, 11.7% of all fish, and 6.0% of all flowering plant species.

The region is also heavily influenced by summer monsoons that cause major seasonal changes in vegetation and habitat. India forms a large part of the Indo Malayan bio geographical zone and many of the floral and faunal forms show Malayan affinities with only a few taxa being unique to the Indian region. The unique forms include the snake family Uropeltidae (primitive burrowing snakes) found only in the Western Ghats and Sri Lanka. Fossil taxa from the

Cretaceous (between 145.5 and 65.5 million years back) show links to the Seychelles and Madagascar chain of islands. The Cretaceous fauna includes reptiles, amphibians and fishes and an extant species (taxon which is not extinct) demonstrating this phylogeographical link (geographically structured genetic signals) is the purple frog. The separation of India and Madagascar is traditionally estimated to have taken place about 88 million years ago. However there are suggestions that the links to Madagascar and Africa were present even at the time when the Indian sub-continent met Eurasia. India has been suggested as a ship for the movement of several African taxa into Asia. These taxa include five frog families (including the Myobatrachidae, a family of frogs), three caecilian families, a lacertid (lacerated) lizard and freshwater snails.

A fossil tooth of what is believed to be of from a lemur-like primate from the Bugti Hills of central Pakistan however has led to suggestions that the lemurs may have originated in Asia. These fossils are however from the Oligocene (30 million years ago) and have led to controversy. Lemur fossils from India in the past led to theories of a lost continent called Lemuria. This theory however was dismissed when continental drift and plate tectonics became well established. The flora and fauna of India have been studied and recorded from early times in folk traditions

and later by researchers following more formal scientific approaches. Game laws are reported from the third century BC. A little less than 5% of this total area is formally classified under protected areas.

India is home to several well-known large mammals, including the Asian elephant, Bengal tiger, Asiatic lion, leopard and Indian rhinoceros. Some of these animals are engrained in culture, often being associated with deities. These large mammals are important for wildlife tourism in India, and several national parks and wildlife sanctuaries cater to these needs. The popularity of these charismatic animals has helped greatly in conservation efforts in India.

The tiger has been particularly important, and Project Tiger, started in 1973, was a major effort to conserve the tiger and its habitats. Project Elephant, though less known, started in 1992 and works for elephant protection. Most of India's rhinos today survive in the Kaziranga National Park. Some other well-known large Indian mammals are: ungulates (hoofed mammals) such as the water buffalo, nilgai, gaur and several species of deer and antelope. Some members of the dog family such as the Indian wolf, Bengal fox, golden jackal and the dhole or wild dogs are also widely distributed. It is also home to the striped hyena. Many smaller animals such as macaques, langurs and mongoose species are especially well known

due to their ability to live close to or inside urban areas.

Diversity: There is insufficient information about the invertebrate and lower forms of animals in India, with significant work having been done only in a few groups of insects, notably the butterflies, odonates, hymenoptera, the larger coleoptera and heteroptera (true bugs) species. Few concerted attempts to document the biodiversity have been made since the publication of *The Fauna of British India, Including Ceylon and Burma* series.

There are about 2,546 species of fishes (about 11% of the world species) found in Indian waters. About 197 species of amphibians (4.4% of the world total) and more than 408 reptile species (6% of the world total) are found in India. Among these groups the highest levels of endemism are found in the amphibians.

It is high time every forester knew the top ten critically endangered species of the world which are mentioned below

1. **Kakapo Parrot** (*Strigops habroptilus*): It is native to New Zealand, also known as owl parrot, and there are currently fewer than 150 left in the wild. Not only this is the world's heaviest parrot it is also the only flight less and nocturnal one.

2. **Chinese Giant Salamander** (*Andrias davidianus*): The world's largest amphibian which faces extinction due to its over exploitation as

food source.

3. **Amur Tiger** (*Panthera tigris altaica*): The largest big cat in the world which can thrive in temperatures as low as -50 degrees Fahrenheit.

4. **Leatherback Sea Turtle** (*Dermochelys coriacea*): The earth's biggest turtle has survived for over 100 million years yet now faces extinction.

5. **Northern Right whale** (*Eubalaena japonica*) and (*Eubalaena glacialis*): The most endangered of all the world's whale species with a population of around 350.

6. **Cross river Gorilla** (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*): Due to the Ebola virus and poachers who sell gorillas for food in west African markets only 300 remain.

7. **Greater Bamboo Lemur** (*Prolemur simus*): Native to Madagascar. Fewer than hundred remain in the island's south eastern and south central forests.

8. **Javan Rhinoceros** (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*): The world's most endangered rhino with just 40-60 remaining on the western tip of the island of Java.

9. **Amur leopard** (*Panthera pardus orientalis*): The Amur leopard lives only in the remote and snowy northern forests of eastern Russia's primary region.

10. **Ivory-Billed wood pecker** (*Campephilus principalis*): Rare but unconfirmed sightings give us hope that a tiny population still exists.

Flora and fauna of Seshachalam hills

Flora: The vegetation in the national park consists of dry deciduous mixed forest with patches of moist deciduous forests in the valleys. The area has about 1,500 vascular plant species belonging to 174 families, of which many are endemic. Some of the rare and endemic plant species like red sanders, *Shorea talura*, *Shorea tumbergaia*, *Terminalia pallida*, sandalwood, *Cycas beddomei*, *Syzygium alternifolium*, *Psilotum nudum* occur in this region.

Fauna: About 178 species of birds from this national park have been identified. The globally threatened yellow-throated bulbul is seen here. Pompadour green pigeon, a bird of the Himalayas and the Western Ghats is quite common in these forests. The critically endangered Oriental white-backed vulture is found in the national park. Some of the other birds found here are: large hawk-cuckoo, blue-faced malkoha, yellow-browed bulbul, Indian scimitar-babbler and Loten's sunbird. In 1984 the Asian elephant, not seen in Andhra Pradesh for nearly 300 years, re-appeared in the southern part of Chittoor district. In 1993, a breakaway herd of five individuals moved to the Chamala Valley of Tirumala forests in this national park. Among predators the leopard is quite common, along with the wild dog. Other predators include hyena, golden jackal, Indian fox, small Indian civet and jungle cat. Sloth bear is frequently

encountered. Sambar, spotted deer, mouse deer, barking deer, four-horned antelope and wild boar are the main ungulates. The nocturnal Slender Loris could be common but is seldom seen. The Indian giant squirrel and tree shrew are other interesting species.

Among reptiles, the most interesting species is the gliding lizard, found in some deep forested valleys. Another important reptile of this national park is the golden gecko. Originally reported from rocky ravines in the Eastern Ghats, the golden gecko was rediscovered from the same area in 1985

Bio-Lab of Seshachalam hills: The excellent exploratory work carried out in connection with the flora and fauna of Seshachalam hills by Bio-lab, Tirupati headed by a team consisting of Sri. N.V. Sivaram Prasad, Asst. Conservator of Forests, Sri. Bhupesh Gupta a scientist and others as team members under the guidance of Sri P. V. Chalapati Rao .I.F.S Chief conservator of forests Tirupati wild life circle is furnished below.

Bio-lab of Seshachalam hills came into being in 2012 under wildlife Management Circle, Tirupati. The Lab caters to research needs of the Seshachalam Biosphere reserve and protected areas in and around it. The main function of the lab is to explore forests and identification of its biological resources. **Since its Inception the team has been exploring Seshachalam hills and discovered many new species which**

have not been recorded so far from this region.

The goal of the laboratory: The goal of Research Laboratory is to provide accurate scientific information and predictive models for conservation of biodiversity and its ecological foundations by ensuring continued generation and equitable access to forest goods and services, particularly for poorer and more vulnerable human groups.

Specimens of biotic components of the reserve are preserved for study and exhibition purpose : 35 specimens of Reptiles, 13 of Amphibians, 80 of Butterflies. 15 of Spiders and Seeds of 102 species have been collected and preserved in the lab for posterity. Forest products, animal products and scats and pellets are also displayed for education purpose.

Preliminary Survey of Herpetofauna (*the reptiles and amphibians of a particular region, habitat or geological period*) **in Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve, of Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh.:**

1. 28 species of snakes belonging to six families were recorded. Among them 2 new records namely Slender Coral Snake i.e *Calliophis melanurus* & Elliot's Shieldtail *Uropeltis ellioti* followed by one New Locality Record Brown Vine Snake i.e *Ahaetulla pulverulenta* were recorded. One was re-discovered after 37 years i.e Nagarjuna sagar Race *Coluber bholanathi*.

2. 12 species of Lizards belonging to five families have been recorded among which Golden gecko (*Calodactylodes aureus*) is a rare and endemic species in this region.

3. 13 species of Amphibians belonging to four families and few rare species have been recorded.

4. So far 84 species of Butterflies belonging to five families have been recorded among which six species are Scheduled species under Wildlife Protection Act 1972. During the study period many rare species and one new record in the region namely Common Banded Peacock (*Papilio crino*) were recorded.

5. **Insect Diversity:** Insects of more than 50 specimens were collected and identified. Some insects have been under identification process among which one Tarantula i.e. *Poecilotheria Metallica* was rediscovered after 113 Years.

6. **Floral inventory studies:** The team surveyed 41 sample plots and recorded 60 species of trees, other shrubs and grasses among which 11 endemic species and many rare species of trees and more than 100 medicinal plants were reported.

7. One new *Cycas spp.* was also identified.

8. **Study of mammal diversity through field cameras:** 22 mammal species were recorded among which rattle, mouse deer ruddy mongoose are rare species.

Tasks ahead of the Bio-lab:

- ❖ Inventory of flora and fauna of Biosphere Reserve to assess the Biodiversity status
- ❖ Monitoring Leopard and co-predators prey and their habitat
- ❖ Status and distribution of endemic species in Seshachalam
- ❖ Study of Ethno-botany of the Biosphere Reserve
- ❖ Study of fodder species of Biosphere Reserve and their nutrient status
- ❖ Diversity of soil micro-organisms and their symbiotic association
- ❖ Diversity of Lichens of the Biosphere Reserve
- ❖ Monitoring and development of Eco-tourism activities of the circle
- ❖ Preparation of Management plan for National Park and Sanctuary
- ❖ Preparation of Management Action Plan for Biosphere Reserve

Developing the eco system of Seshachalam

hills: When I was assigned with the job of writing an action plan along with the Deputy

conservator of Forests T.T.D Tirupati in the month of March 2015 by the Executive Officer Dr. D. Sambasiva Rao I.A.S which is to be implemented for a period of five years by T.T.D Forest wing I have gone through ***Spiritual Forestry plan*** written by Sri. K Rajasekhara I. F. S (Retd.) an epitome of spirituality and a disciple of Sri. Jiddu Krishna murthy.

It is a voluminous master piece of work written about eight years back. This was written for the in-situ and ex-situ conservation flora and fauna of T.T.D forest which is part of Seshachalam hills. The pains taken by the writer in writing such a voluminous book are par excellence and beyond any body's stretch of imagination. The vision envisaged in the plan by Sri. Rajasekhara I. F. S (Retd.) once implemented having been proposed by us on epitomizing as an action plan shall improve the ecosystem of Seshachalam hills and abutting ones by leaps and bounds in the years to come. (Source: Internet and Bio lab Tirupati)

“Don't take rest after your first victory because if you fail in second, more lips are willing to say that your first victory was just luck”.
- Abdul Kalam

“All birds find shelter during a rain. But Eagle avoids rain by flying above the clouds”.

- Abdul Kalam

ABDUL KAREEM – THE MAN WHO CREATED FOREST

Abdul Kareem, 66, of Parappa, Kasargod, of Kerala had a liking to 'Kavu', the sacred forests of Kerala, right from his childhood. He would frequently visit his wife's house in Puliyankulam village and it was during such visits that he noticed the barren hillside land nearby. In 1977, as if on an impulse, he bought five acres of the land for Rs 3750. The people nearby and even his family were not able to comprehend his action, and he became a laughing stock in the locality. The property had only a single well that remained almost dry throughout the year. Since it could not provide enough to water the saplings that he planted, he would carry water in cans from outside sources on his two-wheeler. This continued for three years, at the end of which, nature started responding to his unrelenting efforts and the trees actually started growing.

The change was now to be seen – birds came in flocks and helped Kareem by bringing seeds of umpteen varieties and started setting their nests in this new haven. Soon other forms of life also appeared. The ecosystem was developing at a good pace. In the meanwhile, Kareem bought another 27 acres of land and planted trees all over the place with the new-found vigor, motivated by the fruits of his efforts.

One notable feature of Kareem's forest (that is what the Department of Tourism, Kerala Government, calls this place) which makes it a forest in the true sense is that Kareem never tried to interfere in its natural development once it started sustaining itself rather he gamely

prevented anything and everything that would interfere with the natural growth of his forest. He has never weeded the forest; neither does he sweep away the fallen leaves. There is no effort for intervention of any kind.

The forest has brought about amazing changes to the surroundings. The once dry well in the plot is now brimming with pure, fresh water. The underground water table in an area of about 10 kilometers has risen, it is said. The temperature inside the forest is markedly cooler than outside. Kareem has been living inside the forest since 1986, keeping constant vigil on his creation, which is dearer to him than anything. Visitors are allowed inside even to stay as paying guests for a few days, provided they comply with Kareem's regulations. Plastic is banned inside the forest; so is the use of automobiles. Wild partying, loud noises – all are a strict no-no.

Kareem has resisted various offers to commercialize the forest and to turn it into a theme park. Recognition has come from various corners, including the Sahara Parivar award, Limca Books Person of the year and so on. Visitors have come from many foreign countries. Still, one sincerely doubts whether this gem of a man has received the deserving attention from his homeland. However, for those who know him, the man who was once a laughing stock, has now grown colossal in stature, along with his creation – one that generations will cherish
Courtesy: Dr. Sudhir K. Reddy.

NEWS AND NOTES

Burn your fat with food: - Just when you thought that nearly everything you eat adds all those extra inches to your waist, and packs to your stomach, here's some good news. Researchers from the Pennington Biomedical Research Centre in Louisiana have found that spinach helps curb craving and reduce hunger. A compound found in the vegetable – a concentrated extract of thylakoids, encourages the release of hormones that create a feeling of satiety, hence reducing hunger.

And it is not just the good old spinach that helps you keep fit, some food items actually help you burn calories and boost your metabolism. This is mostly because they have a high thermogenic effect, which enhances thermogenesis, or the energy used by the body after taking in these food items. So, the next time you wish to get rid of that extra fat, don't just go on a crash diet - instead add the following food stuff to your diet to have a healthier, more balanced and calorie friendly diet.

Tomatoes: A must have in every kitchen, incorporating these delicious fruits/vegetables in your daily diet will actually help you reduce your weight, the healthy way. This is because when you eat a tomato, your body releases a hormone called cholecystokinin, which tightens the valve between your stomach and intestine, thereby decreasing the capacity of your stomach, and helping you avoid overeating. Since they are low in calories and high in antioxidants, they are perfect to detoxify your system.

Berries: Have a constant urge to nibble on something throughout the day? Instead of getting into the unhealthy habit of munching on fries, chocolates and other calorie ridden food, go for berries. Blueberries, while being packed with antioxidants and phytochemicals which help protect against cancer and heart diseases, and boost the memory, also are an excellent source of fiber and roughage, thus helping your body eliminate all that unwanted fat.

Olive oil: As much as possible, use olive oil on your salads and food. It contains monounsaturated fatty acids, or healthy fats, which add the necessary amount of good HDL cholesterol in your body, while reducing the bad HDL ones. It also contains polyphenols – antioxidants which help the body detoxify free radicals in your body, and contain anti-inflammatory properties.

Oats: A bowl of oats is the perfect way to start your day feeling healthy, satiated and light. This good old breakfast food contains fiber and proteins that slows the digestion of carbs. It also keeps you fuller for a longer period of time, hence avoiding the desire to binge or snack during mid-morning. To help reduce fat further, you can eat your oats with low fat yogurt. Also, avoid flavored or sweetened oats, and add honey instead of sugar, if you like your oats to be sweet.

Sweet potatoes: They are sweet, delicious and also help you reduce your weight. Sweet potatoes contain carotenoids (a pigment that

helps the body to insulin) and CGA, which slow down the release of glucose and insulin by the body. They are also full of fiber and beta carotene, which helps them fight diseases such as cancer and heart ailments. They also contain anti-inflammatory properties.

Chillies: Now that's something common to our cuisine - we love our food and love it hot. Apart from adding flavor to your food, chillies contain capsaicin, which, according to a study published in the journal Clinical Nutrition, reduces your hunger pangs. It also increases the process of thermogenesis, through which your body burns calories.

Green tea: Apart from being packed with antioxidants, green tea also contains catechin, which help your body burn calories and fat. It also helps to boost metabolism, thus breaking down the food and deriving energy from it. In addition, it is packed with antioxidants which prevent cell damage caused by the action of free radicals on our body. So the next time you feel thirsty, avoid the coke and grab a cup of green tea.

Per Capita National Income increasing:

Centre: - New Delhi, July 22 (IANS) The central government on Wednesday said India's National Income measured as Net National Income at market prices and Per Capita National Income measured as Per Capita Net National Income at market prices have been increasing during the past three years.

Minister of Statistics and Programme Implementation V.K. Singh unveiled a list of

states highlighting this fact in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

He said the estimates of National Income and Per Capita Income for the current financial year will be released in February 2016.

As per the data, Tamil Nadu clocked the top spot having a per capita income of Rs.128,366 followed by Uttarakhand with Rs.115,632. Uttar Pradesh and Bihar featured on the bottom at Rs.40,373 and Rs.36,143 respectively.

Tiger Population is increasing in India: - Six months after India boasted that its tiger population was growing fast, conservationists on Wednesday said 41 big cats had already died this year and worried that the country was not doing enough to save them.

Despite awareness campaigns, India's National Tiger Conservation Authority and the wildlife group TRAFFIC say only seven of the cats died from natural causes, one was killed by authorities and the rest were illegally poached between January and August.

In January, Indian environment authorities had claimed conservation efforts were working as the number of tigers in the country had risen to 2,226 in 2014, up from 1,706 counted in 2010. Experts say the partial death toll proves India was not doing enough to protect the endangered predators, noting 66 tigers died during all of 2014.

Of those which died naturally this year, two were killed in tiger battles, which experts say are becoming more frequent as the big cats vie for territory while their habitats shrink, said

Shekhar Niraj, the head of TRAFFIC-India.

India faces intense international scrutiny over its tiger conservation efforts as it has nearly three-fourths of the world's estimated 3,200 tigers.

The illegal trade in tiger skin and body parts still remains a stubborn and serious threat.

Tiger organs and bones fetch high prices on the black market because of demand driven by traditional Chinese medicine practitioners.

India is also roping in celebrities to promote its tiger conservation program. On Tuesday, the western state of Maharashtra announced that it was appointing Bollywood superstar **Amitabh Bachchan** as the state's tiger ambassador to create awareness about its efforts to save the animals.

Nagaland forest officer honored: - Kohima, Aug 26 (PTI) Nagaland's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force (PCCF & HoFF), M Lokeswara Rao, today received the first Tigerland India Biodiversity Conservation Award. Legendary Bollywood actress Waheeda Rehman handed over the award to Rao, an Indian Forest Service officer, during the Tigerland India Film Festival (TIFF) at Bhopal.

The award carries a memento, a certificate and Rs 25,000 in cash, a release by Nagaland Conservator of Forests (Publicity & Advertisement), Temjenyabang Jamir said.

Tigerland India Film Festival (TIFF) is an initiative to promote wildlife conservation and raise awareness through visual media. TIFF Director Abhinandan Shukla said the work of Nagaland Forest Department under the leadership of Rao

for conservation of Amur Falcon has been acknowledged and appreciated by national and international media.

He said conservation of Amur Falcon by the state forest department in coordination with the authorities of Pangti village has been a great success-story in the field of wildlife conservation.

TIFF acknowledged that the Satellite Tagging of Amur Falcon, a move that earned laurels from scientific community from the country and abroad as it has enabled the world to trace the migration route of falcons.

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Accepting the award, Rao said all credit for the conservation effort of Amur Falcon goes to communities of Doyang area especially Pangti village in Wokha district and to different NGOs and the forest department.

The real heroes in this are the communities who have sacrificed their livelihood for conservation of Amur Falcon, Rao said, adding that he is donating the award money to Pangti village communities.

Birth Day Greetings

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

S.No. Name of Members

Sarva Sri

1.	A.Rasheed Khan	06-10-1937	8.	P.Krishnamachary	07-10-1964
2.	T.Krishna Murthy	07-10-1926	9.	A.Laxman	10-10-1958
3.	L.Lohith Reddy	08-10-1931	10.	P.Ramesh	10-10-1959
4.	U.Govind Rao	08-10-1953	11.	M.Ashok Kumar	13-10-1965
5.	M.Narayan Rao	10-10-1932	12.	R.D.Venkateshwarlu	13-10-1960
6.	R.K.Rao	20-10-1935	13.	Smt. G.A.Prasuna	21-10-1979
7.	V.Ranga Rao	20-10-1945	14.	Ajaz Ahmed	30-10-1956
8.	C.Subba Rao	24-10-1943	15.	K.Appala Narasimha Chary	03-11-1961
9.	B.M.Swamydas	24-10-1954			
10.	K.Ramakrishna	30-10-1926			
11.	G.Prakash	02-11-1950			
12.	K.Jagan Mohan Rao	05-11-1941			

Secretary

S.No. Name of Serving Officers

Sarva Sri

1.	R.P. Khajuria	05-10-1968
2.	Dr.Harish Chandra Misra	07-10-1955
3.	C.P.Vinod Kumar	21-10-1963
4.	Lokesh Jaiswal	22-10-1963
5.	Dr.G.Narsaiah	24-10-1957
6.	Y.Madhusudan Reddy	04-11-1963
7.	D.Nagabhushanam	05-11-1955



LEGAL NOTES

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Ors. Vs. The Secretary, Paramakkavu Devaswom, Thrissur

Indian mythology is replete with many stories on elephant and elephant forms. The first story that comes to mind is Gajendra Moksha of Srimad Maha Bagavatam. Gajendra, the elephant king, proudly displayed his strength and prowess. Once he got into a pool playfully, when his leg was caught by a crocodile in the water. Gajendra could not get rid of the crocodile grip. The fight between the two went on for several days and the elephant was totally exhausted and emaciated, and lost his strength completely. Having no other escape, the elephant prayed to Lord Vishnu for help and the Lord killed the crocodile and Gajendra was saved from the peril. There is another story of Elephant God, Ganesh; Lord Ganesh is known by several other names – Ganapathi (commander of warriors), Vighneswara (obstacle remover), Vinayaka (Leader guide), Ekadantha (one unbroken tusk), Vakrathunda (crooked trunk), Lambodara (Large bellied), Gajanana (Elephant head), Gajavadana (Elephant face), etc., He is considered as God of wisdom. For any ceremony, Ganapathi Puja is first performed. Ganesh Chavithi is a festival in honour of Lord Ganesh which is observed by Hindus with religious fervour on 4th day in the month of Bhadrapada (Between Aug.-Sept). Dasara festival on Vijaya dashimi day is observed

every year in Mysore with a number of gorgeously decorated elephants in a procession and the lead elephant carries golden howdah with idol of Goddess Chamundeswari.

Elephant is a symbol of strength. Kings used elephants as symbol of power for war and peace. Elephants were caught in the wild and domesticated.

Indian elephant (*Elephas maximus*), wild or captive, is an animal included in Schedule-I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 at S.No. 12- B. All the provisions of the Act in so far as they relate to protection, possession, transfer, transportation etc. are applicable to the elephants.

The matter of purchase and transportation of an elephant came up before a Bench of the Kerala High Court comprising The Hon'ble Chief Justice Sri Ashok Bhushan and the Hon'ble Justice Sri A.M. Shaffique. It was observed at the outset in the judgment that the litigation "raises an important issue pertaining to transfer/sale/transaction/transportation of elephants in the state of Kerala. The issue assumes more importance in view of the fact that the state of Kerala for its rich wealth of elephants and large number of traditions and rituals being

associated with elephants in different ceremonies being performed in temples and other places. W.A.No. 1650 /2014 is being treated as the leading case facts of which are noted in detail."

W.P.No.17848 of 2014 was disposed of by a single Judge holding that no permission is required from the Chief Conservator of Forests to obtain elephant from outside the state. The petitioner pleaded that a devotee Mrs. Vinitha Watson, a native of Thrissur and settled in USA, an ardent devotee of the Lord Bhagavathy Paramakkavu, wants to offer an elephant to the Devaswom for which she deposited U.S. dollars 90,000 in the account of Devaswom. The petitioner made an application in the prescribed form to the PCCF seeking permission for purchasing an elephant from outside the state. The application was rejected stating that sale involving commercial nature is prohibited as per Sec. 43 (1) of the Wildlife Protection Act. The Petitioner challenged the order in W.P.requesting the court to direct the PCCF to grant permission to Devaswom to procure and transport a tusker from Assam / Bihar. The W.P was disposed of as stated above against which Writ Appeal is filed by the PCCF and others. After hearing the arguments of the parties, the following issues were framed.

I. Whether under S. 43 of the WL. P. Act sale or

purchase of elephant is permissible and the only requirement for the sale or purchase is to intimate the Chief Wildlife Warden in whose jurisdiction the transaction or transport is effected?

II. Whether under the WL. P. Act any kind of transfer of an elephant is permissible or there is total prohibition of transaction of an elephant under the statutory scheme?

III. Whether the learned single Judge in his judgment has correctly interpreted S. 43 of the WL.P. Act?

IV. What is the procedure statutorily prescribed under the WL. P. Act or the Kerala Wildlife (Protection) Rules to transport elephants from outside the state or to transport elephants from Kerala to other states?

The court carefully went through the relevant provisions of the Act and statutory scheme, including various amendments made in the Act and their objects and purposes as well as the case law on the subject and answered the aforementioned issues in the following manner.

I. Sec. 43 (1) prohibits transfer of an elephant by way of sale or offer for sale or by any other mode of consideration of commercial nature and no permission can be granted under Sec. 40 (2) for such transfer. The report of transfer or transportation to the Chief Wildlife Warden as

contemplated under S. 43 (2) is applicable to those transfers or transportation, which have been effected with permission under S. 40 (2). Transfer or transportation, which are effected after previous permission of the Chief Wildlife Warden, are also to be reported under S. 43 (2) to the Chief Wildlife Warden within 30 days of the transportation.

II. Under the WL. P. Act, all transfers of elephants by way of sale or offer for sale or by any other mode of commercial nature is prohibited. Transfer in other categories cannot be held to be prohibited and can be made with prior permission of the Chief Wildlife Warden as contemplated under S. 40 (2).

III. The learned single Judge in his judgment has not correctly interpreted S. 43 of the Act. The learned single Judge has erred in taking the view that after transfer or transport the only requirement is to report the transfer or transport under S. 43 (2). Report as contemplated under S.

43 (2) is attracted in cases where transfers or transportation are effected with prior permission under S. 40 (2).

IV. For transportation of an elephant from another state to Kerala or within the state of Kerala prior permission is necessary under S. 40 (2) of the Act, for which application in prescribed form has to be submitted by the applicant to the Chief Wildlife Warden, who has to consider the nature of transaction and after considering relevant facts and the scheme of the Act, take decision on the application.

The Division Bench held that that the judgment of the single Judge is unsustainable and therefore it is set aside. W.A. 1650 of 2014 is allowed. The CCF is directed to consider for transportation of the elephant from the state of Bihar to Thiruvananthapuram. The appeal is disposed of on 31.03.2015.

Source: Internet (Against the order/judgment Vs. PCCF)

K.B.R

I'm not a HANDSOME guy, but I can give my HAND-TO-SOME one who needs help. Beauty is in heart, not in the face.

- Abdul Kalam

Creativity leads to Thinking; Thinking provides Knowledge; Knowledge makes you Great.

- Abdul Kalam

కొల్లేరు అభయారణ్యము - రక్షణ

కోకా మృత్యుంజయిరావు

కొల్లేరు అనగానే కొల్లేటి కొంగలు, వివిధ జాతులకు చెందిన అందమైన పక్షులు, అరుదైన పక్షిజాతులతో కలకల లాడుతూ ఉండే విశాలమైన మంచినీటి సరస్సు గుర్తుకు వస్తుంది. +10 వ కాంటూరు వరకు విస్తరించి 901 చ॥కి.మీ వైశాల్యముగల ఈ సరస్సు 6,121 చ.కి.మీ. పరివాహక ప్రాంతము కలిగి బుడమలేరు, తమ్మిలేరు నదుల నుండి రామినేరు, బులుసువాగు, గాడేరు మొదలైన నదుల నుండి ఇతర అనేక కాలువల ద్వారా ఈ సరస్సు లోనికి నీరు చేరుతుంది. ఈ నీటి ప్రవాహము 65000 క్యూసెక్కుల నుండి 1.1 క్యూసెక్కుల వరకు ఉండి 54 టి.ఎమ్.సి.ల సామర్థ్యం కలిగి ఉంది. ఈ సరస్సు లోనికి చేరిన నీరు ఉప్పు టేరు ద్వారా సముద్రంలో కలస్తుంది.

ఇది భారతదేశపు అతి ముఖ్యమైన చిత్తడి నేలలో ఒకటిగా ఉండి మంచి నీటి జీవావరణ వ్యవస్థ కలిగిన సరస్సులలోకెల్లా పెద్దది. ఇందులో సుమారు 200 పక్షిజాతులు, 63 చేప జాతులు నివసిస్తున్నాయి. సుమారు 6000 పెలికాను పక్షులు నివసిస్తున్నాయి. 5000 పెయింటెడ్ స్టార్కులు, 5000 ఓపెన్ బిల్డ్ స్టార్కులు అనేక వేల వేడరు జాతి పక్షులు, ఇతర అనేక వేల అడవి బాతులకు, నీటి పక్షులకు నిలయం. అత్యంత ప్రమాద స్థాయిలో అంతరించిపోతున్న జాతులలో “స్పాన్ బిల్డ్ సాండ్ పైపరు” (వేడరు జాతికి చెందిన పక్షి) కూడా ఈ సరస్సులో ఉన్నట్లు కనుకొన్నారు.

పర్యావరణ రీత్యా తీవ్ర సమస్య కలిగిన గ్లోబల్ వార్మింగ్ కు ఓ కారణమయిన కార్బను ఉద్గారాలను అదుపులో ఉంచుతుంది. కార్బను ఉద్గారాలను అదుపులో ఉంచే పెద్ద అడుగులతో సమానమయినది.

పూర్వ కాలమునుండి ఈ సరస్సు చేపలకు, పక్షులకు ప్రసిద్ధి చెందినది. విలువగల మత్స్య సంపదకు పక్షులే కారణము.

రక్షిత స్థాయి :

ఈ సరస్సులో 308 చ॥కి.మీ. ప్రాంతాన్ని +5వ కాంటూరు వరకు 1999 అక్టోబరులో అభయారణ్యముగా గుర్తించారు. 2002 వ సం॥లో అంతర్జాతీయ ప్రాముఖ్యత గల “రామ్సార్” ప్రదేశముగా గుర్తించబడినది. జాతీయ చిత్తడి నేలగా గుర్తించబడినది. ఇదిగాక ముఖ్యమయిన పక్షి కేంద్రముగా (ఐ.బి.ఎ. సైట్) గా బాంబే నేచురల్ హిస్టరీ సొసైటీ గుర్తించింది.

జీవనోపాధి :

కొల్లేటి ప్రాంత ప్రజలు చేపలు, బాతులు, వ్యవసాయము జీవనోపాధిగా జీవిస్తున్నారు. సుమారు మూడు దశాబ్దాల క్రితము వరకు కొల్లేటి సరస్సును నాశనము చేయకుండా జీవనము సాగించారు. దురదృష్టవశాత్తు +5వ కాంటూరు లోవల వ్యవసాయము అనుకూలముగా లేక తరుచూ వచ్చే కొల్లేటి ముంపుకు గురయి తీవ్ర నష్టము కలుగుతుంది. బాతులు కూడా

జీవనోపాధిగా ఉండేవి. బాతులు పెంచే వారి ఒక్కొక్క బాతుల గుంపులో వందలాది బాతులుండేవి. కొన్నిటిలో వేల బాతులుండేవి. వాటిని కొల్లేటి చిత్తడి ప్రాంతంలో, వరి పొలాల్లో మేపుతూ ఉండేవారు. రాత్రి సమయాలలో కోసివేసిన వరిపొలాలలోను, ఇటువంటి ఇతర ప్రదేశాలలోను వీటిని ఉంచేవారు. వీటి రెట్టలు బలవర్ధకమయిన ఎరువుగాను, చేపలకు సమృద్ధిగా ఆహార సంపాదనకు అవసరమయిన ప్లవకాలు తయారవటానికి ఉపయోగపడుతుండేవి. లారీల కొలది బాతు గుడ్లను రోజూ పశ్చిమ బెంగాల్‌కు ఎగుమతి చేసేవారు. ప్రస్తుతము బాతుల పెంపకము తగ్గిపోయింది.

సమస్యలు - ఆపదలు :

ఈ సరస్సు / అభయారణ్యము అనేక సమస్యలకు ఆపదలకు లోనై ఉంది. వీటిలో ముఖ్యమయినది ఆక్రమిత చట్టవిరుద్ధమైన చేపల చెరువులు, అభయారణ్యములోని నీరు తొందరగా తగ్గిపోయి ఎండిపోవడము, ఆక్రమిత చట్టవిరుద్ధమైన చెరువులు త్రవ్వడానికి చాలా అనుకూలముగా ఉన్నది. వర్షాకాలము తరువాత సరస్సులోనికి నీరు చేరకపోవడము, సముద్రము లోనికి నీరు తొందరగా ప్రవహించే విధముగా ఉప్పుబేరును మార్పులు చేయడము వలన వర్షాకాలము తరువాత నీరు క్రమేపి తగ్గి పోతూ ఫిబ్రవరి నాటికి చాలావరకు ఎండిపోతుంది. దీనిని ఆధారము చేసుకొని 'కిక్కిస' మొదలగు నీటి పొదలను తగలబెట్టి చేప చెరువులను వేస్తున్నారు. "కిక్కిస" మొదలగు నీటి మొక్కల సముదాయము 'రైల్వ' 'క్రీక్స్' కొన్ని కొంగ జాతులు ఇతర అనేక జాతులకు ఆలవాలమై వాటికి తీవ్ర

ప్రమాదమేర్పడుతుంది.

రెండు దశాబ్దాల క్రితము బుడమేరుకు రెగ్యులేటరు నిర్మించి నీటిని క్రిష్ణానదిలోనికి మల్లించడము. తమ్మినేరుకు నాగిరెడ్డి గూడెము వద్ద ఇరిగేషను ప్రాజెక్టు నిర్మాణము వలన, సరస్సు కుంచించుకు పోవటానికి కారణాలలో ఇది ఒకటి. వర్షాభావ పరిస్థితులలో నీరు సరస్సులోనికి సరిగా చేరటము లేదు.

గ్రామాలు పట్టణాల నుండి వచ్చే మురుగు, పరిశ్రమల నుండి వచ్చి చేరే కాలుష్యము సమీప మరియు సరిహద్దులలో ఉన్న చేపల చెరువుల నుండి చేరే కాలుష్యపు నీరు, పంటపొలాలలో నుండి వచ్చే రసాయనిక ఎరువులు, క్రిమిసంహారక మందుల అవశేషాలవలన అభయారణ్యము తీవ్రమైన కాలుష్యానికి గురవుతుంది.

జీరాయిత భూములకు నష్ట పరిహారముల చెల్లించక పోవటము వలన స్థానికుల తీవ్ర ఆందోళనచే అటవీశాఖ అభయారణ్యమునకు సరిహద్దు వేయలేక పోవటముప. మిగిలిన అభయారణ్యరక్షక పనులు చేయలేక పోవటమే కాకుండా అటవీశాఖకు స్థానికులకు మధ్య తీవ్ర ప్రతికూల వాతావరణము ఏర్పడినది.

కొంతమంది ప్రజాప్రతినిధులు, స్థానికులు అభయారణ్య పరిధిని +5వ కాంటూరు నుండి +3వ కాంటూరు వరకు తగ్గించాలని తీవ్రముగా పట్టుపడుతున్నారు. ఈ సందర్భముగా ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ శాసనసభ మరియు ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ వెల్డెలైఫ్ బోర్డు 14681 ఎకరాల జిరాయిత భూములలో సంప్రదాయక వ్యవసాయపద్ధతి జీవనానికి

అనుకూలముగా లేదని నష్టపరిహారము చెల్లించటము ప్రభుత్వంకి భారమని అభయారణ్య పరిధిని +5 నుండి +3 కాంటూరు వరకు తగ్గించాలని తీర్మానించారు.

అయితే పై తెలుపబడిన విధముగా +5వ కాంటూరు వరకు వ్యవసాయము అనుకూలము కానందున అభయారణ్య తగ్గింపు ఉపయోగము లేదు.

ఈ విధముగా తగ్గించుటవలన పెలికను, పెయింటెడ్ స్టార్కుల సంతానోత్పత్తి కాలనీలకు అపాయము కలగటానికి అవకాశముంది.

అభయారణ్య పరిధిలోని రోడ్లకు నీటి ప్రవాహానికి అనుగుణముగా సరిఅయిన బ్రిడ్జిలు లేవు. కిక్కిన, గుర్రపుడెక్కు అభయారణ్య పరిధిలో బాగా విస్తరించాయి.

అభయారణ్య రక్షణ చర్యలు :

2006 సం॥లో సుప్రిం కోర్టు ఒక ప్రజా వాఙ్మంపై కొల్లేటి అభయారణ్య జీవావరణ వ్యవస్థ, జీవ వైవిధ్యాన్ని పరిగణించి అభయారణ్యములో ఉన్న అక్రమ చేపల చెరువులను నిర్మూలించి కొల్లేటి అభయారణ్యాన్ని రక్షించవలసినదిగా ఆజ్ఞాపించింది. డా॥ అజీజ్ కమిటీ కూడా అభయారణ్య పరిధిని తగ్గించకూడదని తన నివేదికలో తెలిపింది.

వెట్‌ల్యాండ్ రూల్స్ 2010 ప్రకారము ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ప్రభుత్వము ఈ అభయారణ్యాన్ని రక్షించవలసి ఉంది. ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ప్రభుత్వము చేసిన “వాల్టా” చట్టప్రకారము 2003 సం॥లో ‘నీరు మీరు’ కార్యక్రమానికి సంబంధించి విడుదల చేసిన సర్క్యులర్ ప్రకారము కూడా ఈ అభయారణ్యము రక్షించవలసి ఉంది.

ప్రజావాఙ్మాలు కోర్టు కేసులతో పర్యావరణ ప్రేమికులు పర్యావరణ వేత్తలు అభయారణ్య రక్షణకు ప్రయత్నిస్తున్నారు. ఈ విధముగా అభయారణ్య రక్షణ ప్రయత్నము ఎంతవరకు సమంజసము

జిరాయితి భూముల నష్టపరిహారము :

భారత దేశపు అతి ముఖ్యమయిన జీవావరణ వ్యవస్థ కలిగి ముఖ్యమైన చిత్తడి నేలలో ఒకటిగా ఉండి ఈ అభయారణ్యమును ప్రభుత్వము రక్షించవలసి ఉన్నది. ఈ ప్రక్రియలో 14681 ఎకరాల జిరాయితి భూములకు నష్టపరిహారము చెల్లించవలసి ఉన్నది.

అయితే జిరాయిత భూములకు నష్టపరిహారము (2006 సం॥లో 650 కోట్లు చెల్లించవలసి ఉంటుందని అంచనావేశారు. ప్రస్తుతము ఈ నష్ట పరిహారము పెరిగి ఉంటుంది.) చెల్లించడానికి ప్రభుత్వము తనకు భారమని అంటుంది. అయితే వివిధ ప్రాజెక్టులను, పరిపాలనకు, పారిశ్రామిక సాంకేతిక అభివృద్ధికి ఆధునిక నూతన కార్యక్రమములకు, అనేక ప్రజాహిత కార్యక్రమాలు ఏ విధముగా చేపట్టుతున్నారో ఆ విధముగా పర్యావరణ రీత్యా అతి ముఖ్యమయిన దానిని రక్షించాలి. అనేక ప్రజెక్టులకు, వివిధ కార్యక్రమాలకు చేసే ఖర్చుతో పోలిస్తే ప్రభుత్వానికి నష్టపరిహారము చెల్లించుటము అంత భారము కాదు. రాష్ట్ర, కేంద్ర ప్రభుత్వాలు రెండూ కలసి నష్ట పరిహారము చెల్లించవలయును. కాంపా మరియు ఎర్ర చందన నిధులు కూడా వాడవలయును.

+5వ కాంటూరు వరకు నీటి నిర్వహణ :

అభయారణ్యములో +5వ కాంటూరు వరకు

సంవత్సరముపొడువునా గాని 10 నెలలు గాని చిత్తడి నేలలు ఉండునట్లుగా ఉప్పుటేరుపై రెగ్యులేటరు నిర్మించవలెను. దీని వలన నీళ్ళు ఎక్కువ కాలము ఉండి పక్షి, మత్స్య సంపద సమృద్ధిగా పెరుగుతుంది. ఇంచుమించు సంవత్సరమంతా మత్స్యకారులకు జీవనోపాది లభిస్తుంది. అభయారణ్యములో ఆక్రమ చెరువుల తవ్వకము కష్టతరమౌతుంది.

పెలికాను, పెయింటెడ్ స్టార్కు పక్షులు :

అటవీశాఖ పెలికాను వక్షుల సంరక్షణకు, సంతానోత్పత్తికి ఉప్పలపాడు పక్షుల కేంద్రము స్ఫూర్తితో ఆటపాక దగ్గర 300 ఎకరాలలో నీటి నిర్వహణ, గూళ్ళ నిర్మించుకొనుటకు అనువుగా ఎత్తయిన స్తంభాలను అమర్చి పెలికానులు తిరిగి కొల్లేరులో పెరగటానికి కృషి చేశారు. పెలికాను పక్షులతో బాటు పెయింటెడ్ స్టార్కుల సంఖ్య కూడా బాగా పెరిగింది. అయితే వీటి పెరుగుదలను అరికట్టవలసి ఉంది. వీటి ఆహార అలవాట్లు దృష్ట్యా ఇవి ఇంతకన్నా పెరుగుట క్షేమము కాదు ఇప్పటికి సుమారు 11000 పెలికానులు, పెయింటెడ్ స్టార్కులు ఉన్నాయి. కావున వీటి సంతానోత్పత్తికి స్తంభాలను అమర్చటం మానివేయాలి.

పర్యాటకము :

ప్రకృతి అందాలు చిందే కొల్లేరు లాంటి ప్రదేశాలు పర్యాటకానికి అనువుగా ఉండి మంచి ఆదాయాన్నిస్తాయి. అనేక కటుంబాలకు జీవనోపాధిగా ఉంటాయి. 2014సం॥లో జరుపుకున్న అంతర్జాతీయ వలసపక్షుల దినోత్సవము పర్యాటక రంగముతో అనుసంధానించారు. పర్యాటక రంగము, జీవనోపాధి, ఆవాస ప్రదేశాల రక్షణ ఒకదాని కొకటి అనుబంధము కలిగి సత్ఫలితాలను ఇస్తాయి. ఇండియాలో కొల్లేరు

లాంటి చిత్తడి ప్రదేశానికి చెందిన భరత్ పూర్ కెయిలాదేవ్ నేషనల్ పార్కు దీనికి మంచి ఉదాహరణ. భరత్ పూర్ నగరపు అత్యధిక కటుంబాలు ఈ పక్షి కేంద్రములపై ఆధారపడి ఉన్నాయి. భరత్ పూరే కాక ఆగ్రా, జయపూర్ లో కూడా కొన్ని కటుంబాలు ఈ పక్షి కేంద్రము పై ఆధారపడి ఉన్నాయి. కొల్లేరు పర్యాటకము కూడా భరత్ పూర్ ను స్ఫూర్తిగా తీసుకొని భరత్ పూర్ వలె కొల్లేటిలో కొంతభాగము చిత్తడి నేలలలో, దైకులతోను నీటి పక్షులతో పాటు చెట్లమీద ఉండే పక్షులతోను కూడా నిర్వహించి పూర్తి పర్యాటకము హోటళ్లు, లాడ్జీలు, రిసార్టులు, టాక్సీలు టూరిస్టు బస్సులు, బోటింగ్, గైడ్లు మొ॥వి అటవీశాఖ ఆధ్వర్యములో స్థానికులతో నిర్వహించవలెను.

పరిరక్షణ విషయములో భరత్ పూర్ అనుభవముకూడా తెలుసుకొనవలెను. కొన్ని సంవత్సరముల క్రితము భరత్ పూర్ పక్షి కేంద్రమునకు నీరు లేక పరిస్థితి దారుణముగా మారిపోయింది. కొన్ని సంవత్సరములు నీరు లేకుండా ఇంచుమించు నిర్మాణవ్యయము అయిపోయి నశించి పోయే పరిస్థితి ఏర్పడింది. అయితే అంతరించి పోకుండా తిరిగి నీటిని పునరుద్ధరించి పూర్వపరిస్థితికి తీసుకు వచ్చి పర్యాటకులతో పక్షులతో కలకల లాడుతున్నట్లు చేశారు.

కావున అభయారణ్యపు పరిధిని తగ్గించకుండా రక్షించి జీవవైవిధ్యాన్ని పర్యావరణాన్ని కాపాడి పై చెప్పబడిన రక్షణ చర్యలు, జిరాయితీ భూముల నష్ట పరిహారము, +5వ కాంటూరు వరకు నీటి నిర్వహణ పర్యాటకము, జీవనోపాధి కలిగించి కొల్లేటి అభయారణ్యమును రక్షించవలయును.

ఓలేజ్

ఎ. చంద్రకుమార్

వృద్ధాప్యం... ముసలితనం

ఇలా ఉన్న మమ్మల్ని చూసిన మీరు,

ఓర్పు.. నేర్పు... సహనం...,

ఇవే చూపాలి మాపై మీరు

చేయి జారిన స్పృహను...

పాడైన టేబుల్ క్లాతు...

ఇది మేము కావాలని చేసినవి కావు!

మాకు వృద్ధాప్యం వచ్చింది కదా..

చూపు తక్కువ ... పట్టు తక్కువ....

కలిసే మాదిరి అరవకండి... కరవకండి...

మాకు చూపుతో పాటు - చెవులూ సరిగా వినపడవు,

అంత మాత్రాన

మమ్మల్ని “చెవుటి వాళ్ళు”

అని సంబోధించకండి.

దయచేసి ఇంకోసారి వినిపించండి

లేదా... వ్రాసి చూపించండి.

క్షమించండ్రా... ఓహో! సారీరా!

మేము ముసలి వాళ్ళం

మా మోకాళ్ళు అరిగి నొప్పి పెద్దంటే

ఓపికతో మమ్మల్ని లేవనెత్తండి

ఎలాగంటారా! అదే మేము మీకు నడక నేర్పామో.. అలాగే

మేము చెప్పిందే మళ్ళీ మళ్ళీ చెప్తుంటే

ఓపికతో వినండి.. అంతే కాని మాపై సెటైర్ల వేసి నవ్వకండి

దయచేసి మమ్మల్ని భరించండి.

మీకు తీరిక ఉంటే..

కాసేపు మాట్లాడుకుందాం కనీసం కొన్ని క్షణాలు ...

మాకు మీరు తప్ప ఎవరున్నారు?

మాకు తెలసు - మీరు చాలా బిజీ.. బిజీ..

కథలు - అవి ఏమి వద్దు

కనీసం ... కొంత సమయం

మాకొరకై కేటాయించండి.

మీకు గుర్తుందో లేదో

చిన్న తనంలో... మీరు చెప్పే బుల్లి బుల్లి కథలు

మేము ఓపికతో వినేవాళ్ళము.

అలాగే - సమయం వచ్చినపుడు

అంటే, మేము అలసి, సాలసి, కృంగి, కృషించి

మంచం పై ఉన్నప్పుడు

అనుకోని పరిస్థితుల్లో పక్కను తడిపితే క్షమించండి.

అలాంటి క్షణంలో మాపై కరుణతో

జాలితో - ప్రేమతో - ఓపికతో

చివరి క్షణాలలో మమ్మల్ని ఆదరించండి.

మేము ఇంక ఎంతో కాలం బ్రతకం.. అని తెలిసినపుడు

స్వర్గానికో, నరకానికో పోతాం కదా

అప్పుడు..

మీ చేతుల్ని మాకు దయతో.. అందిస్తూ..

భయపడకండి..

మీకు మేమున్నాము. అని మీరంటుంటే

మీరు ధైర్యం చెప్తుంటే

మేము దేవుని వద్దకు చేరినపుడు

దేవుని చెవులో గుసగుసలాడతాము

ఏమని...? తెలుసా!

దేవుడా... దయచేసి మా పిల్లల్ని

కరుణతో లాలించు..

వారు చేసిన తప్పుల్ని మన్నించు

ప్రేమతో దీవించు..

అంబులెన్స్ రాజవరం ఉషా వినోద్

ఉదయం ఆటోలో వెళ్తుంటే వెనుక ఎక్కడో అంబులెన్స్ వస్తున్నట్లు శబ్దం వినిపించింది.

ఆ రోడ్లో హెవీ ట్రాఫిక్...

కానీ మనిషి తలచుకుంటే ఎలాగైనా కాస్త సందివ్వగలడు...

అలా నలుగురు కొద్ది కొద్ది గా దారి ఇస్తే ఆ బండి చక చకా ముందుకు వెళ్ళగలదు.

అందులో పేషెంట్ ఉంటేనే ఆ తొందర.

ఆ హారను అని అక్కడ బళ్ళ పై ఉన్న అందరికీ తెలుసు కానీ ఆ బండి హారన్ ఇస్తూనే ఉంది..

అయినా ఒక్కరికైనా వినబడలేదో లేక మనకెందుకులే! అన్న ధోరణినో, కాక మరీ టూ బిజీ నో..

ఏమీ అర్థం కలేదు. వినబడక పోవటం అన్నది ఉండదు..

ఉంటే బండిపై ఎలా ఆ రోడ్ మీదికి రాగలరు?

పోనీ టూ బిజీ అన్నా కూడా ..

ఎంత బిజీలో ఉన్నా కళ్ళు చూడక మానవు, చెవులు వినక మానవు..

ఆ శబ్దం మనసు మానదు. మరి మనకెందుకులే... అనుకున్నారా?

అయ్యో! మానవత్వము కూడా మనిషి మరిచి పోతున్నాడే! అనిపించింది.

ఆ బండిలో తన సంబంధించిన వారుంటే అది వేరేగా ఉండేది

మన లాంటి మనిషీ అందులో ఉన్నాడు అనే విషయం అసలు ఆలోచించకుండా ఎవరి చిత్తం వచ్చినట్లు వారు వెళ్తున్నారు.

మా ఆటో కొంచెం పక్కకు వెళ్ళింది అప్పటికే.. కానీ అందరూ అలా చోటివ్వాలి కదా!!

అంబులెన్స్ కదిలేది, ఆ రోగిని ఆసుపత్రిలో చేర్చేది.

ఒక్క క్షణం ఆలోచిస్తే చాలు ప్రాణాలు కాపాడవచ్చు.

పక్షులు, పశువులు తమ జాతికి ఏదైనా అపద వస్తే వెంటనే గమనించి ఆ ప్రాణి చుట్టూ చేరి ఏదో ఒకటి చేసి బ్రతికించాలని

ఆరాటపడతాయి.

మనిషి మాత్రం అంత పెద్ద హారన్ వింటున్నా తన సంకుచితత్వంతో నేను నాది అనుకుంటూ అసలు మనం అన్న మాటే

మరిచి పోతున్నాడు భగవాన్!!

ఈ సంఘటన గమ్యం చేరే వరకు నా మనసులో కలుక్కుమని అంటూనే ఉంది.

ఎలా ఈ పరిస్థితి / తీరు ని మార్చటం?

The author has raised an important and pertinent point. Readers are requested to bring awareness among their friends and relatives to give way to ambulance and save lives.

Editor

జీవ వైవిధ్యం (BIO-DIVERSITY)

ఒక అద్భుత ఆవిష్కరణ (A WONDER INNOVATION)

చెట్టు - పుట్ట - వాగు - వంక - రాయి - రప్ప - నీరు - ఆకాశం -

గాలి, వాన, చీకటి, వెలుతురు, భూమి, ఆకాశం

ఇలా

అడవిలో సాగే అన్వేషణలో - ఇవన్నీ ప్రముఖ పాత్ర వహిస్తాయి

ప్రతి ఒక్కటి వైవిధ్య భరితంతో ఎన్నో ఆవిష్కరణలు జరగాలి ।

వాటిని ఆసాంతం పరిశీలించాలి - అత్యున్నత సాంకేతిక విజ్ఞానంతో

వాటిని పరిశోధించాలి (Research)

మన అడవిలో కీటకాలు, సరీశృపాలు, జంతుజాలాలు

వాటి ఉనికి, మనుగడ, వాటి జీవన సరళి ఈ జీవవైవిధ్య మనే (Bio-Diversity)

చిత్రంలో (Picture) స్పష్టంగా (Clear) కనిపించాలి.

ప్రకృతి పచ్చదనంలోని అందాలు, పక్షుల కిలకిల రాగాలు, పులుల గాండ్రంపులు,

నెమలి నాట్యాలు, జింకల చెంగుచెంగు పరుగులు,

సెలవరు గలగలలు, పిల్లగాలుల సవ్వడులు - ఒక్కటేమిటి -

ఒక్కనిమిషం ఆ ఆనందాన్ని ఆస్వాదిస్తుంటే -

మన మనసు నిండా తియ్యని తలపులు - కనులు తిప్పుకోలేని

మధుర దృశ్యాలు ఆనంద దోలికల్లో ముంచెత్తి - మనల్ని ఉక్కిరి బిక్కిరి చేస్తాయి.

కానీ

నేటికీ పరిశోధనలు సాగుతూనే ఉంది

పులుల గణన (Census) జరుగుతూనే ఉంది

ఇతర రాష్ట్రాల నుండి మనరాష్ట్రానికి స్వచ్ఛంద సంస్థలు

(Non Govt. Organisations) వస్తూనే ఉన్నారు

వారి పరిశోధనా వ్యాసాలు - వారి అన్వేషణ పత్రాలు

మన అధికారులకు సమర్పిస్తూనే ఉన్నారు.

ఈ గణనలో(Census) సాంకేతికత ఇంకా పెంచాలి అన్వేషకులకు,

పరిశోధనకు కావల్సిన వస్తు వాహనాలను వారికి కావలసిన

సదుపాయాలను సమకూర్చాలి. దానికి అటవీ శాఖ కీలక పాత్ర పోషించాలి.

పగ్ మార్కులు, కెమరా ట్రాపింగ్ కాకుండా శాటిలైట్(Satelite) వ్యవస్థను అనుసంధానం చేయాలి

అడవిలో బేస్ క్యాంపు(Base Camp) లు వెళ్లలేని దుర్భేద్య ప్రాంతాలకు కూడా వెళ్ల గలిగే

మీలుకల్పించే సాంకేతికను రూపొందించాలి.

ప్రపంచ పటంలో మనం ఎక్కడున్నాం అని గూగుల్(Google) ద్వారా పరిశీలిస్తే

అంతా స్పష్టంగా కనిపిస్తుంది. దానికి మనం ఆర్థికంగా పుంజుకోవాలి.

నూతన అన్వేషకులు రావాలి - సమర్థత కలిగిన అధికారుల సేవలు గుర్తించాలి

వారి పాత్ర అత్యంత ప్రాముఖ్యమైనదని నిర్ధారించాలి - వారికి సముచిత స్థానం కేటాయించాలి.

అప్పుడే

జీవవైవిధ్యమనే ఒక అద్భుత అవిష్కరణ పుడుతుంది. మనవిజ్ఞానం, మన ఆశయం ఎవరెస్ట్

శిఖరం(Mount Everest) అంత ఎత్తుకు ఎదిగి విశ్వకేతనాన్ని ఎగురవేస్తుంది.

ఇది నిస్సందేహం (No Doubt)

ఇది నేను మీకిచ్చే మేఘసందేశం (Clouds - Message)



Humming bird feeds recently hatched chick



Olive backed sun bird (*Cinnyris jugularis*) feeds fledgling



Insectivorous plant *Drosera burmanni*



Butter fly, *Talicada nyseus* (Red pierrot)



Coluber bholanathi (Nagarjuna Sagar race)

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Date of Publication: 24-09-2015 Total pages 56 Date of Dispatch : 4th or 5th of every month