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VANA PREMI

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Leopard can climb the tree but not the Tiger



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EDITORIAL

World Pollution Prevention Day: The world Pollution Prevention or Control Day is observed every year on 2nd of December throughout the globe. This is also observed in India on the same day in order to give the honor and remember the thousands of human beings who had lost their lives or suffered various complications because of the Bhopal gas calamity. Bhopal gas tragedy happened in the intervening night of 2nd and 3rd December 1984 due to the accidental discharge of the poisonous chemical known as Methyl Isocyanate released from the Union Carbide Chemical Plant in the city of Bhopal. About 500,000 people were affected to the poisonous gas of which around 2259 died immediately and Government later, declared that totally 3,787 people died due to the gas tragedy. This was identified as the biggest industrial pollution disaster of the history worldwide. With increasing human population, pollution has become a great concern throughout the globe. Increased pollution is posing threat and danger to our existence. Pollution can be of different types such as water pollution, air pollution, sound pollution, soil pollution, and food pollution, etc. The observance of World Pollution Prevention Day on 2nd December is an attempt to show our concern about rising pollution. Pollution has adverse effects on almost everything in our life.

Water pollution: Water pollution is defined as presence of toxic chemicals and biological agents in water that exceed which is naturally found in the water and may pose a threat to human health and the environment. Water pollution may consist of chemicals introduced into the water bodies as a result of various human activities. Any kind of water can become polluted, regardless of its size or location. This includes lakes, or huge water bodies. The groundwater and surface water consist of open wells, bore wells or tube wells swimming pools, ponds, lakes, creeks, rivers, seas, and oceans that may all become polluted at some point. In Hyderabad mighty River Musi and Hussainsagar tank are the worst examples which have become today the most polluted water bodies and turned into drains. For hundreds of years these two water bodies supplied drinking water to the residents of this city. The main sources of water pollution are all resulted from the disposal of chemical substances coming from medical, industrial and household waste, agricultural fertilizers and insecticides, disposal and accidental oil spills that pollute the water to a large extent due to which aquatic fauna are killed. Vijayawada city had a major problem of dumping of garbage into the river Krishna which is flowing from center of the city of Vijayawada and causing River Krishna polluted.

Water pollution may cause a large variety of diseases and poses a serious problem for human health. Water pollution is also killing aquatic fauna.

Air pollution : Air pollution can be defined as the presence of toxic chemicals or compounds in the air, at levels that pose a health risk which are usually not present naturally, and which lower the quality of the air or causes detrimental changes to the quality of life, such as the damaging of the ozone layer or causing global warming. Air pollution is probably one of the most serious environmental problems confronting our civilization today. Air pollution is dangerous for people of certain blood groups, particularly detrimental to cardiac health of people with the blood groups A, B, or AB. (Deccan Chronicle 22-11-2017) Most often, it is caused by human activities such as mining, construction, transportation, burning of fossil fuel, industrial work, agriculture, smelting, etc. In our country Delhi is the worst polluted city and we will not be able to see up to 10 meters distance on roads during the month of November. This is causing different types of lung and other ailments. This is also causing accidents on high ways and other places in which many lives and huge property is lost. Government of Delhi is really worried to prevent this pollution which is mostly caused due to burning of fossil fuel in the vehicles and burning of debris of Agriculture. Next Patna,

Gwalior, Raipur Ahmadabad, and Lucknow are the most polluted cities of our country.

Noise pollution or sound pollution: Noise pollution or sound pollution means an unwanted or undesirable sound that leads to physical and mental problems. Noise pollution is dependent on the loudness and frequency of the sound. In fact, when the sound exceeds its limit, it becomes fatal for human and other organisms. The noise intensity is measured in decibels or dB. Normally, sounds more intense than 30 decibels are called noise. Anyway, all the sounds come under noise pollution which makes the mind turbulent or restless. A person can bear the noise up to 85 decibels, after which his hearing power can be damaged. The World Health Organization considers the sound of 45 decibels ideal for cities. But measurement of sound in most big cities exceeds 90 decibels. Noise beyond a limit produces many diseases, such as hypertension, stress, making people vulnerable to forgetfulness, depression, insomnia, and many other serious ailments. Noise disturbs the tranquility of all creatures and increases mortality rate in them.

Soil pollution: Soil pollution is defined as the presence of toxic chemicals in soil, in high enough concentrations to pose a risk to human health and the ecosystem. Soil pollution affects plants, animals and humans alike. However, children are usually more susceptible to

exposure to contaminants, because they come in close contact with the soil by playing in the ground; Patancheruvu is the most polluted industrial area very close to Hyderabad city

Food pollution: Food pollution or food poisoning is generally defined as the presence in food or associated with food of toxic chemicals, which are not naturally present in food. Food pollution can affect each of us by causing mild to severe food illnesses or, worse, contributing to or causing the development of serious health problems such as hormonal and metabolic problems, or even various types of cancer. In rare cases when highly polluted food is consumed, serious food poisoning or death may occur almost immediately which is known as food poisoning. Most of the eatable sold in the market are adulterated. When these adulterated eatables are eaten by use it causes many diseases to human beings and animals.

On world pollution prevention day various programmes and events are organized in schools, colleges and offices for creating awareness for the prevention of pollution. If each one of us show our concern about the mounting pollution and pledges to use eco-friendly products, our environment can be improved in a drastic way. Use of cycles instead of cars or motor bikes, avoiding use of chemical cleaners, using low energy bulbs instead of normal bulbs, avoid using plastic bags, planting trees and avoiding misuse of paper are some of the effective and useful ways to mitigate the burden on our ecosystem and to safeguard our precious environment. Various state Governments and Government of India have enacted various Acts to prevent pollution. Now it is our duty to prevent various types of pollution to improve our environment and lives.

Vana Premi wishes that we all understand the ill and evil effect of different type's pollution and keep water, air, soil, food, and environment free of pollution for better quality of life. **QMK**

**We are in the last month of the year.
Just felt I should thank everyone who
made me smile this year. You are one
of them. So here's a big Thank you.**

-Editor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To
The Editor,
Vana Premi,
Hyderabad.
Sir,

I enclose herewith a letter addressed to me by Sri A. Krishnaswamy, IFS, (Retired) appreciating the article 'Are Forests and Tribals Inseparable? He was Head of the Forest Department of Karnataka State and a venerable forester known for his erudition and commitment to forests. The article was first published in March 2011 issue of Vana Premi.

I am of the view that publication of the letter in Vana Premi may motivate those who missed to take notice of the article to have a look at it now. Kindly publish the letter if you consider it appropriate.

Warm regards,
Yours sincerely,
JVSharma

Copy of letter written by Sri. A. Krishna Swamy, IFS Retd. to Sri. J.V. Sharma

Dear Sri Sharma,

Trust you are all well.

Running at the closing stage of my 94th year, I am writing this letter, as a member of the vanishing generation of foresters, more pleased with your article 'Are Forests And Tribals Inseparable', than to commend you.

Nevertheless, your thought provoking article so candidly analysed with profound details and being yet another effort by you to correct certain misnomers, as also found in the preamble of the Bill on Forest Rights Act, merits a Doctoral award.

You have brought out the benefits of the then British administration to survey, classify and frame rules and regulations for a systematic management of forests of our natural forests, which have helped to save our forests at least to the extent we have been finding them now. Yet some sources call this a colonial exploitation. How sad?

May you be blessed by the Almighty with a healthy, long life.

With regards,
Yours sincerely,
A.Krishnaswamy)

PROTECTING OUR FORESTS

By
S.D. Mukherji

The increasing emission of carbon dioxide in to the atmosphere leading to rise in temperature and consequent impact on climate change is now an established fact. In the meeting held in Paris 196 countries came together to take measures to reduce global warming below 2° C by reducing carbon the emission. Each participating country has pledged its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to reduce the carbon emission. India is taking a leading role and has pledged to sequester 2.5 to 3 billion tons of Carbon dioxide equivalents additionally by 2030 through enhanced tree cover. To achieve this, India will need to extend tree cover on at least 28.34 million hectares, outside the existing forest cover. The NDC lays emphasis not only on carbon sequestration but also adaptation to climate change through a strengthened flow of benefits to local communities that are dependent on forest and agriculture for sustenance.

The UN Environment Gap Report 2017 warns that a big carbon emissions gap exists between the levels that can be achieved by 2030 with present climate commitments, and what needs to be done using set pathways to limit increase in global average temperature to less than 2° C or more ambitious 1.5 C by the year. According to this report fossil fuels and cement production account for 70% of greenhouse gases. The alarming number and intensity of extreme weather events in 2017 such as hurricanes, droughts, and floods, add to the urgency of early action. A large potential to close the emission gap lies in solar and wind energy, efficient appliances and passenger cars, afforestation and stopping deforestation. These six factors hold a total potential of up to 22 Giga tons CO₂ equivalent (GtCO₂e) per annum. Let us discuss the last two items that can play an important role to reduce the emission significantly.

The present situation of forest as per the State of Forest Report 2015 by the Forest Survey of India gives the following figures:

Area in Square kilometers

Density of forest covers	Area	percent of geographical area
Very Dense Forest (Forest with density of +.7)	85,904	2.61
Modestly Dense Forest (Forest with density between 0.4 to 0.7)	3,15,374	9.59
Open Forest (Forest with density of less than 0.4 density)	3,00,395	9.14
Total forest cover	7,01,673	21.34
Tree cover outside the forest	92,572	2.82
Total forest and tree cover	7,94,245	24.16

It is clear from the above figures that real good forest is confined to 2.61 percent of the geographical area and rest of the forests are in varying degree of degradation. The reason for the degradation of forest lies in the failure of forest protection against illegal removal of forest produce, uncontrolled annual forest fires burning the fallen leaves that is preventing the formation of humus and killing the young seedlings, preventing natural regeneration of forest, uncontrolled grazing beyond the carrying capacity of the forests resulting in hardening of forest soils, damage to young seedlings by trampling and competition on the fodder available in the forest with the wildlife, forest encroachments, losing land for the developmental activities such as mining, road construction, irrigation projects, etc. resulting not only loss of valuable natural forests with all its biodiversity but adding in the fragmentation of forestlands causing additional problems for the movement of wildlife but encouraging the forest encroachment. Therefore, the first major goal of the government should be to take urgent action to improve the forest protection in the existing forests of 79.42 Million Hectors. The importance of forest protection has several benefits apart from carbon sequestration such as:

1. providing livelihood to the forest dependent communities by providing NTFP, fodder, fuel wood and small timber for their daily use
2. in the conservation of water
3. and soil,
4. reducing air pollution,
5. Providing biodiversity in plants and animals for finding lifesaving material through research and also to prevent climate change.

In spite of such a great importance of forests we are losing the forests on a regular basis because of the low importance attached to it in political discourse.

The National Forest Policy of 1988 had made it mandatory to involve the local people, especially the tribal population, living in and around the forests, in the protection of development of the forests. To give them first right on the forests produce and carry out area development. The policy was welcomed by the entire civil society and in many places it brought a good will between the tribal people and the forest officers. Implementation of Forest Rights Act (FRA) has derailed the effort made to protect the forests and regenerate the degraded forests with the help of people or "Joint Forest Management (JFM)" that was showing sign of success in many States. In fact the tribal people who participated in the protection and development of the forests find them as losers in the implementation of FRA as by giving up the agriculture on forestland and raise plantations under JFM programme of the government they are not entitled to any land rights under FRA whereas those who encroached upon the forestlands and were in possession of forestland on the 13th of December 2005, irrespective of when and how the family took possession of the forestland,

have been given rights over the land. It is reported that forest encroachment has increased after the implementation of FRA as many feel that if they could encroach forestland the government may, in future, shift the date of entitlements making them legally eligible. Even after giving away millions of hectare to tribal people there are many more applications pending and even after rejection none have vacated the encroached lands. Can there be any answer to such injustice meted out to the people who participated in JFM against those who went on encroaching into the forestlands? Those forest officers who were actively associated with the promotion of JFM have no face to confront the people who were active partners in its successful implementation and stand deprived of the benefit from FRA.

Coming back to the government plan to extend the forest cover by at least 28.34 million hectares, outside the existing forest cover to meet the target agreed in the NDC, it looks a very difficult task for a government that is not able to protect the existing natural forest which provides the ecological and environmental safety on a much larger scale compare to tree plantation outside the forest lands. Moreover, if the past results of afforestation or plantation on lands outside the forest is considered the data provided in the SoFR 2015 indicates forest cover outside the forest is confined only to 2.82 percent of the geographical area even though we have been planting trees under the *Vanamahotsava* programme since 1950s.

It will be better first to stop the deforestation

of the existing forests that is in a very poor state. Every year forests are being lost either by giving forestlands for developmental purposes or through encroachments. For example the construction of Kaleshwaram Irrigation Project in the State of Telangana needs 3196 hectares of forestland for the construction of canals and partly going into submergence of reservoirs. Such diversions, even if compensated by giving equivalent land for raising compensatory afforestation, cannot replace the loss of environmental benefits from the forest lost. Moreover, projects passing through the forests create permanent disturbance to forests and wildlife that can never be compensated. Assuming that developmental projects taken for the larger good of the public is necessary, one cannot plead the importance of forest in such cases and stop all developmental programmes. What should be ensured is that at least the compensatory afforestation is done successfully which is seldom done.

The biggest mistake made by the government was to give rights on the forestlands to millions of tribal without examining their presence in the forest for three generations as stipulated in the FRA Act. There is no issue if the genuine tribals are given the rights who fulfill the basic presumption of deprivation. The implementation of FRA has created patches of *patta* lands without demarcation of their boundaries. It is impossible for a forest guard to monitor each patch and detect the illegal extension. This has resulted in the fragmentation of forestland. As per the State of

Forest Report 2015 the following is the position of forestland fragmentation. It is impossible to protect a fragmented forest where people are freely moving and cultivating. No wildlife can live and breed in such fragmented forests.

During this year during the one week training course for the IFS officers in Environment Protection and Training Institute at Hyderabad a brain storming session on the protection of forests was conducted. The gist of the recommendation is reproduced below:

1. Almost all officers were unanimous on the shortage of existing manpower at the ground level and it needs to be increased substantially for effective management of forest and wildlife.
2. Forest officers should be recruited and trained adequately for scientific management of various discipline such as wild life management, preparation of working plan, plant propagation and research.
3. Forest officers be trained and made responsible both for the protection of forest and environment.
4. Forest officers should be given power to monitor the overall development of the forest fringe villages on similar line as the district collector does for the whole district. This would improve the relation between the forest officers and the forest dependent people and help both the people and the protection of forest.
5. Beneficiaries of getting individual rights on forestlands under Forest Rights Act should be brought on the fringes of the forest boundaries so that they can avail the services provided by the government to the forest fringe villages. It will then be possible to protect and develop the remaining forest without biotic interferences.
6. Government of India may issue guidelines to enforce the protection of forest given to the community under the FRA.
7. A time limit may be placed by the government of India for claiming rights under FRA so that remaining forest can be developed.
8. All government departments should be sensitized on their role on the protection of forest and environment at all levels.
9. The age limit for the recruitment of forest guard should be made as is done for army. The qualification should also be restricted up to 12th class as over qualified and aged persons are unable to discharge the rigorous duty of forest protection.
10. There should be regular training programmes so that officers can upgrade their knowledge and get an opportunity to share the experience of the officers working in different States.
11. Forest officers should be involved in the implementation of *Swatch Bharat Abhiyan* in the forest fringe villages.
12. A format should be developed for uploading all relevant information on forest in a website and anybody looking for information on forest can get it from the

website rather than forest officers spending time in replying to various queries raised by multiple agencies increasing the office work and leaving little time for field work.

13. Government should provide adequate funds to the department to implement the various prescriptions of the working plan which is not being done due to paucity of funds.
14. After the diversion of forest lands the department should be empowered to monitor the utilization of the diverted land.
15. Valuation of forest should include the environmental services.
16. Certain minimum percentage of budget of each department should be earmarked for spending on forest and environment related matters and monitored by the forest department.
17. The use of forest for any purpose should be limited to the carrying capacity of the forest.
18. Forest department should provide dedicated officers to deal with court cases

failing which the conviction rate is falling and forest related crimes are increasing year after year.

19. Pure Water is a major contribution of the forest and that should be harnessed for the good of the people.

Therefore, the major challenge before the foresters lies in finding a way out to improve the forest protection by convincing the political constituency as in democracy political will is the major factor for bringing any policy change and its implementation. What we, generally, find that governments have been paying more emphasis on plantation activity and very little attention on the protection of natural forests. There is no doubt raising plantation is very good provided there is a long term protection plan and it is implemented. However, such plantations even if they are successful cannot replace the benefit from the natural forests with its diversity of flora and fauna and its many fold advantages both direct and indirect.

NOTICE

The 86th GENERAL BODY MEETING of the Association of Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will be held on 17-12-2017 (Sunday) at 11.00 a.m. in Aranya Bhavan, Hyderabad. All the members of the Association are requested to make it convenient to attend the meeting with their spouses.

DISPARITIES IN RESERVED CATEGORIES: IS THERE ANY REMEDIAL MECHANISM?

By
J. V. Sharma

"Adivasi – Lambada friction continues" shrieked a headline in the otherwise sober *The Hindu* dated 9th November 2017. The sub-heading "Lambada teachers accused of neglecting students from aboriginal tribes" gives out the substance of the news report. The story in short is that about 25 teachers belonging to Lambada tribe were demonstrating under the aegis of Lambada Employees Association in front of Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) office, at Utnoor the previous day, demanding action against the villagers of Marlavai village that had prevented the Lambada teachers from attending to their duties. It is said that the slogans raised on the occasion incensed the Adivasi students studying in various educational institutions at Utnoor who converged on the scene. Tension prevailed when the two groups came close to attack each other and the timely intervention by the police saved the situation for the day. It is also reported that the ethnic tribal people had also conducted a protest march demanding removal of Lambada community from the list of Scheduled Tribes. The readers may remember my article "Loud thinking by an old forester-II – Inter-tribe dispute in Asifabad District: Forest Perspective" published in November 2017 issue of *Vana Premi* wherein some aspects of the background were discussed.

Unusually, the war of attrition between Adivasi and Lambada Tribes appears to continue as is reported in *The Hindu* dated November 11, 2017. It is unusual because the Adivasi Gonds are not known for sustained confrontational responses. Patience, humility and adjustability are the hall mark of the Adivasi tribe and ironically, these very traits kept them at the receiving end for decades and even generations. They were deprived of land rights for a long time in erstwhile Adilabad District and when they got some land –post Komram Bheem episode, the same was usurped by others. They patiently put up with non-delivery of justice under Land Transfer Regulation later. This time round it appears different. Now the bone of contention is not 'the land' but the disparity in availing of welfare benefits meant for tribal population. The entire tribal population irrespective of their, hue are happily in possession of sizeable extent of forest land passed on to them as largesse under Forest Rights Act. Rumors are afloat that some enterprising individuals who have nothing to do with tribes or tribal areas and some with no root even in the State are proud possessors of land –thanks to myopic vision that ushered in the legislation.

To go by media reports, hostility appears to intensify with time. Non-partisan observers hoped that things would return to normal with saner elements in the respective communities entering field to calm the frayed tempers. Even if this did not happen, people expected the State Government to step in to bring the situation under control. There does not appear any such initiative in public knowledge. If it is so, it is an abject failure on the part of the administration. However important the issues may be for the warring contenders, peace and tranquility are the foremost priority of any administration worth the name. News reports continue to pour in like; "Lambada teachers told to leave school: Gond villagers ask them not to return" (The Hindu dated 11.11.2017), "No end in sight to Adivasi-Lambada differences: Need for clear guidelines on verification of Agency Certificates" (The Hindu dated 12.11.2017), "Adivasis not to work in Lambada Farms" (The Hindu dated 15.11.2017), "Adivasis continue to boycott Lambadas: Charge Lambadas with taking jobs on fake ST Certificates" (The Hindu dated 18.11.2017) and "Anger against Lambada Tribe continues to simmer: The situation in Agency villages resembles the days preceding Indervelli firing in 1981' & "March silently in protest; Demand lifting of prohibitory orders in Agency areas" (The Hindu dated 19.11.2017.) The message that comes out is loud and clear;

- A. The ethnic tribes, the Gond, Kolam and Pradhan feel that, though they are large in population and more backward, socially, economically and educationally, are deprived of their legitimate share of welfare benefits extended by the State.
- B. They further feel that inclusion of Banjaras (Lambadas) in the list of Scheduled Tribes in 1976 triggered large scale influx of Lambada community into their traditional habitat which resulted in deprivation of their landholdings and their share of welfare benefits thereby causing hardship.
- C. They also feel the Lambada community is discriminating them even in imparting education and not allowing them to progress and develop.
- D. The ethnic tribes demand that Lambada community should be de-notified as Scheduled Tribe and a thorough verification of certificates issued to them should be undertaken, seeking otherwise *status quo ante* prior to 1976.

Impartial observers feel that the means adopted by them in asking the Lambada teachers to go away from their schools or not to cooperate with Lambadas in farming activities etc. are not appropriate to say the least. Ours is a land of rule of law and no one can go against laws in force. Legalities and action to be taken aside, it is clear that deep rooted mistrust and hostility exists

between the two communities.

In this context, I may share with the readers that when I challenged the provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA) before Hon High Court of Andhra Pradesh at Hyderabad way back in 2007, one of the points made out by me was that the legislation does not address the inter-tribe and intra-tribe inequalities and disputes. I stand fully vindicated now with Adilabad tribal dispute staring us in the eye

Coming back to the issue under discussion, the problem before the Government and the well intentioned public, is how to diffuse the volatile situation prevailing in the tribal areas of erstwhile Adilabad District and whether there is any way to accommodate the demands of ethnic tribal population? The issues involved are far more complicated and frankly speaking, I am afraid that a one word answer to the question will have to be an emphatic 'no' under the present circumstances. The legal hurdles are un-surmountable as they are linked to Fundamental Rights which cannot be interfered with.

The Preamble of the Constitution sets the goal as to how the Country should be. The aim is to secure to all its citizens Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The democratic Republic stands for the good of all the people with the concept of 'welfare State'. The economic justice assured by the Preamble can hardly be achieved if the democracy envisaged by the Constitution was confined to only 'political democracy'. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the Person who has piloted the passage of Constitution in the Constituent Assembly, has this to say in his concluding speech:

"Political Democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity which are not to be treated as separate items in a trinity. They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot be divorced from equality; equality cannot be divorced from liberty. Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity."

Constitution has been so framed as to ensure that the spirit behind what Ambedkar said is not lost in the way. Care has been taken to see that ideals spelt out in the Preamble are adequately reflected in various provisions enshrined in the Text. Part III of the Constitution dealing with Fundamental Rights with Articles 12 to 35 should come for special mention in this context as it deals with rights vested in citizens. This Part is so sacrosanct that the provisions thereof are not amendable even though the Parliament is vested with powers to amend other Articles. Each Article of Part III is

important in as much as it highlights the primacy of the citizen in the democratic society and at the same time encourages a level playing ground for all the people.

It is necessary to say here as to how these provisions become relevant for the issue under discussion i.e. inter-tribe dispute. Article 14 of the Constitution emphatically declares that the State does not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of laws. As is the wording, the Article assures equality of all persons before law. However this does not mean that in their application all laws shall be equal to all the persons. It forbids class legislation but does not forbid classification which rests upon reasonable grounds of distinction. The guarantee of equal protection is therefore a guarantee of equal treatment of persons in equal circumstances permitting differentiation in different circumstances. It does not prohibit legislation which is limited either in the objects to which it is directed or by the territory within which it is to operate. It requires that all persons subjected to such legislation shall be treated alike under the circumstances and conditions both in the privileges conferred and the liabilities imposed. In order to give practical shape to these ideals it became necessary to adopt the doctrine of classification which has necessarily to be reasonable implying that it must not be arbitrary but must be rational.

Article 15 of the Constitution enjoins upon the State not to discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. However, Clause (4) of the Article states "Nothing in this Article or clause (2) of article 29 shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes." Equality guaranteed by Constitution was sought to be achieved through "Special Provisions relating to certain classes" in Part XVI of the Constitution for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Anglo Indian Community. It was absolutely essential to make special provisions for the advancement of those sections of the community who are socially and economically backward because the democratic march of the nation would be impossible if those who are handicapped are not aided at the start. The principle of democratic equality can work only if the nation as a whole is brought on the same level. The Constitution therefore prescribed certain temporary measures to help the backward sections to come up to the same level with the rest of the nation.

The Special Provisions are incorporated in the Constitution and dealt in Articles 330 to 342. Having laid the roadmap thus far for the uplift of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the makers of our Constitution have not gone ahead to define the disadvantaged communities and left loose ends

which now pose problems as the one we see in Asifabad District. The Constitution is silent on the criteria. It is totally left to the President of India, in articles 341 and 342, to identify, specify and notify who the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes are in that State, albeit in consultation with the Governor of the State. There are innumerable variations among the communities and within a community. There are glaring inequities among the target groups with regard to the level of development, social, economic and educational backwardness.

The North-Eastern States are predominantly inhabited by Tribes. There is substantial presence of STs in States like Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, AP, Telangana etc. The ST society in North-East States is far more evolved and developed than many of the developed societies of the rest of India. Still, the STs as a whole are treated to be uniformly equal in backwardness throughout the country. Scheduled Tribe communities in northern districts and of Nellore of AP State are far more developed than the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of *Nallamalais* and interior tracts of Adilabad District or north & central Odisha or Chhattisgarh. Yet, their level of development has never been the guiding factor to determine their eligibility for welfare measures. In the instant case, while the Banjaras in the neighboring districts of Maharashtra are not Scheduled Tribe, the Banjaras in adjacent Adilabad District of Telangana are notified as STs though the dividing line is imperceptibly thin.

Another grey area in this issue is that our Constitution deals with Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes almost in similar manner. Case in point is Part XVI of the Constitution. It does not seem to be reasonable because the Scheduled Caste communities shared the habitat with civilized society and yet lived as outcastes all through, undergoing indignities and deprived of even minimum facilities normally available to his non-SC neighbor. As against this, the ST community lived away from civilized world in their own chosen exclusive habitat in the interior areas on their own volition and lived their own life with dignity. ST communities are known for self-esteem. Backwardness of SCs is imposed by society while the backwardness of STs is self-chosen and historical.

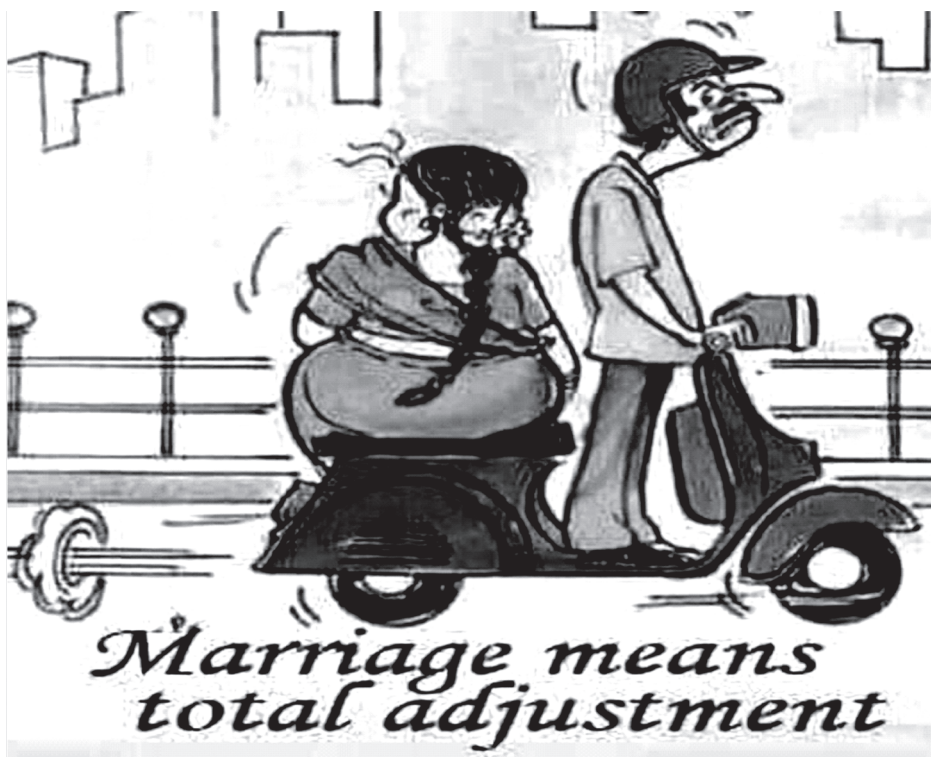
Like in STs, there are inequities even among SCs. To cite an example, *Malas* and *Madigas* are the two main castes among the Scheduled Castes in composite State of Andhra Pradesh. *Madigas* who claim to be in the majority complain of injustice and discrimination on delivery of the benefits of welfare programmes the bulk of which they allege are enjoyed by the minority *Malas*. They demanded categorization of Scheduled Castes to ensure fair & equitable distribution of welfare benefits. At one point of time, even the State Government was sympathetic to the demand and

enacted a legislation creating four categories A, B, C and D among SCs of the State. The matter went before the Supreme Court and the legislation was struck down on the grounds that the State Legislature or the State Government cannot interfere with the list promulgated by the President. It was further held that the Constitution intended the SCs and STs to be homogeneous entities. As against this, many social scientists argue that social and educational backwardness among the reserved communities is the basis on which the President is empowered to notify the communities as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and inequality between various sub-castes of these communities is undeniable and needs no further proof. Terms like *Maha Dalit* and *Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups* are too common to ignore. They however concede that such grey areas in the Constitution need to be looked into afresh keeping the very basic objective of delivering the welfare benefits to the neediest. Opinion across the political spectrum appear to be the same but there is hesitancy among the polity in initiating proactive steps, may be for extraneous reasons. It is however clear, any change in the existing arrangement is possible only through a legislation by Parliament and with an amendment to the Constitution.

But it is easier said than done. Political considerations are likely weigh more in coming to a decision. No political party is prepared to be seen coming out boldly over the issue lest they may antagonize the opposite group. On the other hand they lose no opportunity to win their favor. Taking example of the States of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, it can be seen that the respective Chief Ministers are of promising community oriented sops whether they fit in the larger interests of the society. They promise to declare all Lambada Habitations (*Thandas*) as Revenue villages. Such a proposition goes against very basic concept of an Indian Village so fervently articulated by Gandhiji and other national leaders. The village is a unit where different sections of the people live in peace and harmony and more importantly, learn to live together. Balkanization and community oriented habitations will only promote exclusivity which is anti-thesis to a healthy and harmonious rural life. Such knee-jerk reactions for cheap popularity will only encourage divisions among various sections of the people and may even give rise to similar demands from other communities.

Above all, the polity as a whole does not seem to be objective in application of special provisions. It is natural to presume that the people and the nation are on the path of progress and development. The country as well as the social environment in the country has vastly changed for the better from the days of Independence. It otherwise means that there is definite positive impact on basic parameters of human development. Yet, the politicians are not tired of painting a pathetic picture

of living conditions by perpetuating the concept poverty. As the time passed, development indices record growth however marginal it may be. But there is clamor even from the reasonably well endowed sections of the society for inclusion in reserved categories. This is what the ethnic tribes in Adilabad District argue. Can any community, not backward enough to be included in reserved categories in 1950, be considered for reservation after 25 years or 50 years or 75 years? Will the political class look at the problem honestly, casting off the Holy Cow syndrome now prevalent? Reverting back to the inter-tribe dispute under discussion, the analogy between the legal position in respect of SCs and STs cannot be lost, given the Constitutional position. It is highly improbable that the Government will be able to act upon the demands made by ethnic tribal groups. It is also unlikely any concrete steps will be taken by the administration in this regard. The legal position discussed in the above paras is too complex to yield instant results. However, the Government would do well if it stops encouraging castes, casteism, race, racism, religion, religiosity and the benefits liked thereto. Glaring violation of law, rules and procedure alleged by ethnic tribes can however be looked into to diffuse the situation, to infuse confidence in them and to provide level playing ground for all the sections of the society.



WHAT WOULD BE THE FUNCTIONAL LIFE OF A RAPIDLY SILTING LAKE?

By

Dr. B. Raghotham Rao Desai

"An author sees the world and speaks his mind in his column"

Preamble:

Water, the Elixir of life—even "the central, existential fact of life"—is very important not only for daily consumption but also for various other applications including hydrological and water-related sectors. **'Probability-distributions of rainfall'**, to understand the rainfall pattern of an area, and **'computation of minimum assured rainfall'** are widely used now-a-days. Rainfall variability has major implications on country's economic prosperity and hence it is important to understand the underlying process of rainfall pattern, in a given region. About 80% of world and 60% in our country, agriculture and other related activities are rain-dependent: diverse, complex, under-invested, risky, distress-prone & vulnerable!

Soil-resources are precious, and are directly linked to food-security (qualitatively as well as quantitatively), environmental-quality & biodiversity. The concept of Soil-Quality and its significance had been recognized since the ancient times. Soil-Quality can be defined as the **"capacity of soil to function within land-use**

and ecosystem-boundaries: to sustain biological productivity, maintain environmental-quality to promote: plant, animal and human health". Soil-Quality cannot be seen in isolation: it must be linked to "certain types of land use and the associated management", being a measure of soil's fitness to support any crop's growth, without becoming degraded or 'otherwise harming the environment'.

Fact file: There were some six gully-plugs and a number of other soil-conservation devices (such as dry stone masonry check dams by the Agricultural Sector, SC), supported by vegetative conservation on measures (by the Agricultural Sector) around a fairly big water-harvesting-structure in an important watershed, a factional region established by physical relationships, in the vicinity of the State's capital which was in my jurisdiction as Project Director (in which capacity I worked for a considerable period) some three decades ago. The sizeable *Nala*-bund and the farm-ponds yonder filled with water to the brim during an off-season, in that ravenous region and were such a sight for sore eyes to behold! Right

opposite was an impressive Ravine-reclamation-structure. Just adjacent was the six-lane National Highway (towards the country's Commercial Capital, and back from it) on which hundreds of vehicles constantly go at hectic speeds, round the clock — yet none halted to admire the 'said creations' almost roadside, and the glorious patch (incidentally, the only patch on the entire stretch!) of several hectares of successful-plantations (of mixed variety: of local & exotic sp.,) raised by the Forest Sector, over the years! I used to bemoan the fact that everyone was in a mighty hurry and no one had the time to stop, or at least stare at the resplendent nature and enjoy what was there "for free", even during a season when nature was at its best, and make a shady-canopy for quite a long-stretch along the main road, abutting & stretching all along the project-area!!

I had strolled out (after having my pack-lunch) on the outskirts of the project-site during one of those visits (after the visit of a Chinese delegation, led by the PCCF Sri ShyamSundar in 1988), to feast my eyes on the nature's display, when I perceived a small group of college students, led by an elderly gentleman with professorial looks & attire, busy clicking pictures of the surrounds. When he spotted me, he asked "May I transgress the project-boundary along with the students and have an intimate look?" I was so elated that I said "By all means, go ahead!"

They took several shots of 'individual landmarks' and trees which had come up, even filming clusters of agave, established in the ravines and on the boundary.

The leader of the study group then asked me if they had all been planned & executed during my tenure. With great pride, I told them: "We raised the nurseries of indigenous sp., (by hiring a patch of irrigable land in the vicinity), got tall well-grown saplings planted (at the onset of the monsoon, availing pre-monsoon showers), tending & nurturing them subsequently (carrying out the weeding, scraping, soil-working as cultural operations), after treating the entire catchment-portion of the watershed with suitable soil-conservation-measures, even tackling the upper reaches at micro-level, and thereafter zealously protected the area from fire, goats & stray-cattle, as also from vandals: once they get established and attain heights beyond cattle's' reach, we would be leaving them to nature to prosper, while the permanent structures remain till last, and then to rejoice when they ultimately attain!

"One recalcitrant *nala* however, posed a problem for quite-sometime — it did not change its course, despite several efforts made. Anyway, driven to the verge of giving in, it was thought that **there are always exceptions — — *nalas* & streams and even rivulets too have their individual traits and we have to**

resign ourselves before the nature's might!

But the very next season, we spotted the seraphic beauty flowing 'the way we had envisaged', allowing us to reclaim an eroded path—perhaps reluctantly, after testing our patience: literally a late rebel towing our line!!" The gentleman listened to my narration patiently. Apparently impressed, he offered to take a photo of me against the background of our upcoming-project. I said "I would be an eye sore", and he departed, laughing.

Conclusions:Against the backdrop of degraded eco-systems of the country-side, we have to take into account the fragile, heterogeneous, deforested and erosion-prone areas, associated with environmental & ecosystem-instability problems.

The problems of denudation of 'sloppy and undulating' landscapes are accentuated due to illicit cutting of vegetation and overgrazing which cause floods, and siltation of reservoirs, making the task that difficult of 'controlling measures' for the 'menace of emerging torrents'.

Hence, **planning ought to be made from 'day one' of the lakes and reservoirs when envisaged, calculating storage-capacities, their siltation-rates, amounts of silts-arrested and possibilities of release of water to augment lake-storage, realizing the severity of such a serious soil-erosion-problem, and go in for 'intensive Soil and Water Conservation Measures' in the catchment, by addressing the hydrological problems in the region.** Then only it helps to trap silt-laden inflow, and **increase** the water-bodies' 'functional-life', **their lives being strongly related to the 'functional-efficiency' of the Silt-detention-dams.** There is also a need to work-out the transmission-losses, the mechanisms of releases, taking away of water from wildlife-areas, the economic feasibilities and financial viabilities. Let it be well-understood as a conclusion that **'de-siltation-regime' shall have to be followed regularly to keep the siltation under control.**

ERRATA

1. In the article "Urban Tree Planting" by Mr. B.M.T. Rajeev the names of plants on page nos. 35, 36, and 37 of Vana Premi November issue generic and species names are clubbed to gather instead of space between the generic and species names. The error is regretted.

2. In the same article on page number 40 Para 4, **Ground preparation:** "the pits should be of 60 Cm. or 75 Cm. square" Instead of **Square** it may be read as **cube**. - Editor

WISH TREE

By

M. Padmanabha Reddy

On 30th of September 2017 – *Vijayadasami* day - I happened to visit Venkateshwar Temple in our locality. It was about 5 P.M. and many residents were sitting around a branch of '*Shami or Jammi Vriksha*' (*prosopiss picigera*). The branch was firmly put in the soil and around it some flowers were placed and a *Pujari* (priest) was reciting *Slokas*. The ritual is called '*Jambi*' in rural Telangana and is the concluding function of *Dasara* festival. While I was seated in a chair a junior *pujari* handed over slips to the assembled and informed us to write our wish on slips and tie it to the branch of *Shami* tree. He assured the gathering that *Shami* is a wish tree and if prayed with sincerity the tree will fulfill the wish. Everybody assembled took it seriously and scribbled few lines and when their turn came went to *pujari* took his blessings, took few leaves of *Shami* (believed as gold) and tied their slip to the branch of wish tree.

The story is related to *Mahabharata*. *Pandavas* after completing 12 years of *Aranyavasa* were going for one year *Agnathavasa* (incognito). The mightily *Gandiva* (Bow) of Arjuna and other arms of *Pandavas* identify the *Pandavas* as such they wanted to keep them in a safe place. For this purpose they selected a big *Shami* tree in a graveyard where people avoid going and placed all their arms in the thick foliage of the tree and took shelter in the Kingdome of king *Drupada*. At the end of *Agnathavasa* *Pandavas* reclaimed their arms safely and defeated the *Kauravas* in the war of *Uttara Gograhanam*.

It is reported that *Gautama* Buddha attained

enlightenment (*Bodhi*) while meditating underneath Ravi tree (*Ficus religiosa*). The spot was used as shrine even in the life time of the Buddha. King Ashoka was most diligent in paying homage to the *Bodhi* tree. Ashoka's daughter *Sanghamitra* brought a piece of the tree with her to Sri Lanka where it is continuously growing to this day in the island's ancient capital *Anuradapuram*.

In traditional Hindu families' ladies offer prayers to *Tulasi* plant (*Ocimum sanctum*) for health and wealth of the family. Some people perform marriage of *Tulasi* with *Usiri* plant (*Phyllanthus emblica*) treating *Tulasi* plant as *Sri Laxmi* and *Usiri* as *Sri Vishnu* (*Tulasilagnam*). There is yet another custom where people perform marriage of *Neem* (*Azadirachta indica*) and *Ravi* (*Ficus religiosa*). It is believed *Bilva* (*Aegle marmelos*) is liked by Lord Shiva and the tree is planted in every Shiva Temple. When *Devatas* and *Asuras* churned the sea, among others *Kalpavriksha* came out which is believed to provide many things on asking.

Near Golconda fort (Hyderabad) a temple is constructed in the trunk of a huge tree called African Baobab (*Adansonia digitata*). Regular prayers are offered in the temple and people make *Pradhakshana* (taking rounds) of the tree for fulfillment of their wishes. *Adansonia* trees are common in Tanzania – (East Africa) where families live in the chiseled portion of the trunk. Wish trees is not confined to India alone. In advanced countries like U.K. and Japan praying the tree for fulfillment of wish is common.

In Scotland, an oak tree is traditionally linked with fertility. The trunk and branches are covered with hundreds of coins which have been driven through the bark and into wood. The local tradition is a wish will be granted for each of the coins so treated.

Most people tosses a coin into a fountain, or drop a penny down a wishing well or a holy river, hoping by some miracle that the act would make their wish come true. In a tourist village of postmarking located in North Wales, staff noticed some peculiar trees covered with coins. On enquiry it is found that tourists were following centaury old tradition of using the trees as wishing-Trees. According to belief one could rid herself of an illness by sticking a coin into a wishing tree so that the tree would assume the illness. If a person pulled one of the wishing trees coins out, he would become ill. Modern takes on the wishing tree includes hanging trinkets, colorful fabrics or written wishes and worries from branches. The wishing tree concept is one that has existed in much of the world.

In Gold coast area of Australia the local Tribal performs *spooja* and protects the Wish tree. Tourists visiting gold cost are taken to green mountains where visit to wishing Tree is part of tour itinerary.

Wish trees are spread all over Japan. Some were massive and ancient. Other was young and practically bent over by the weight of all the paper wishes. From the distance, the wishes resembled white flowers from few feet away; it was possible to read some of the wishes without touching them. People asked for health, for peace, for a better job etc. and the trees were treated with great reverence. Notion of one's

ancestor or God seeing a wish tied to a tree and making that wish come true is interesting. The concept is elegant, mystical and deeply spiritual. Wish tree is a combination of the spiritual and natural works. Trees surely are one of the most magnificent of all creations and the thought of having a wish fixed to such a powerful and majestic and living thing is conforming millions of people around the word.

In Kenya a hotel is constructed on a big tree spread over 5 Ac. It is called Tree Top hotel and a tourist attraction. Thanks to the tree the hotel is making brisk business.

Christmas tree: It is a decorated tree, usually an evergreen conifer such as spruce, pine or Fir associated with celebration of Christmas. The tree is traditionally decorated with roses made of colored paper, apples, wafers, and illuminated. An angle or star is placed at the top of the tree to represent the star of Bethlehem.

Traditionally Indians revere the nature in general and the *Panchabhutas* (Five elements) in particular. Apart from individual trees, sacred groves are maintained where *Rushies* meditate. Unfortunately in independent India, in the name of development, Forests are cut Water, Soil and Air is polluted. Now is the time to repair the damage caused by planting more trees and supporting *Swachcha* Bharat programme.

If there is a beautiful tree in your yard or nearby park, you might think of it as a wish tree. You might tie a small piece of paper to a branch, watch it flutter in the wind, and wait to see what the future holds.

Ref: 1. Wishing Tree: by John Shores
2. Internet

MAN ANIMAL CONFLICT

By

T. G. Birdavade

I would like to highlight from Ice age animals till today's situation in Maharashtra and in country. Did HUMANS wipe out the woolly mammoth? Study finds a direct link between hunting and the extinction of large Ice Age animals. Extinction of species from 132,000 years and 1,000 years ago was studied. 30 per cent that died out were in areas linked to the expansion of humans. This provides evidence for 'overkill' theory in which humans exterminated many of the large animals as they explored various countries. It contradicts theory large animals became extinct due to climate change. Woolly mammoths and other giants of the Ice Age were wiped out by human hunters not climate change. This is according to a new study that blames man rather than environment for the demise of the massive animals that included sabre tooth cats, huge kangaroos and a leopard sized marsupial lion. The pattern of extinctions for 177 species weighing 22lbs (10kg) or more between 132,000 years and 1,000 years ago found those that died out during that interval were most closely related to the global expansion of humans. Woolly mammoths and other giants of the Ice Age were wiped out by human hunters not climate change. Researchers at Aarhus University in Denmark came to the conclusion after looking

at the pattern of extinctions for 177 species between 132,000 years and 1,000 years ago. The researchers whose findings are published in Proceedings of the Royal Society B have carried out the first global analysis of the extinction of the large animals, and the conclusion is clear - humans are to blame.

Dr. Soren Faurby said: 'Our results strongly underline the fact human expansion throughout the world has meant an enormous loss of large animals.'

One of two leading theories states that the large animals became extinct as a result of climate change, meaning many animals no longer had the potential to find suitable habitats and they died out as a result.

But, because the last Ice Age was just one in a long series of Ice Ages, it has puzzled scientists that a corresponding extinction did not take place during the earlier ones.

The other theory concerning the extinction of the animals is 'overkill.' Professor Jens-Christian Svenning, of Aarhus University, Denmark, said: 'We consistently find very large rates of extinction in areas where there had been no contact between wildlife and primitive human races, and which were suddenly confronted by fully developed modern humans' Modern man

spread from Africa to all parts of the world during the course of a little more than the last 100,000 years.

This hypothesis states that modern man exterminated many of the large animal species on arrival in the new continents.

This was either because their populations could not withstand human hunting, or for indirect reasons such as the loss of their prey, which were also hunted by humans.

The researchers found out of their 177 species that disappeared, Africa only lost 18 and Europe 19, while Asia lost 38, Australia and the surrounding area 26, North America 43 and South America a total of 62.

The extinction of the large animals took place in virtually all climate zones and affected cold-adapted species such as woolly mammoths, temperate species such as forest elephants and giant deer, and tropical species such as giant Cape buffalo and some giant sloths.

It was observed on virtually every continent, although a particularly large number of animals became extinct in North and South America, where species including saber-toothed cats, mastodons, giant sloths and giant armadillos disappeared, and in Australia, which lost animals such as giant kangaroos, giant wombats and marsupial lions.

There were also fairly large losses in Europe and Asia, including a number of elephants,

rhinoceroses and giant deer.

According to the researchers of this study, the results show the link between climate change and the loss of megafauna is weak, and can only be seen in Europe and Asia. On the other hand, there was a very strong correlation between the extinction

There was news published in "Maharashtra Times" in Marathi "*Sarkarla Jag kadhiyenar*" means when government will Wake up .The news published under this banner. Forest areas are surrounded by increasing population with speedy civilization. Two persons were killed by Bison in last week in Kolhapur District. Such type of incidences, are now increasing. By offering compensation such problem will be solved?

BREAKING OF FOOD CYCLE The greenery of western *Ghat* always attracted tourist from all over world. The forest in these regions is Evergreen and semi evergreen which is all time green forest having existence of bison, panthers, elephants, and bears. The forest area of shahuwadi, Koyana, Chandoli, Radhanagari and Chandgad are protected forests. There is existence of rare plants in these forests. Western *Ghat* is elongated towards south up to Kerala. In this region there is existence of elephants on large scale. Due to increase, of human colonies close to these forests, has created serious problems to the food chain, though the forest area has not been decreased. Strict implementation of Environmental acts have,

decreased the hunting of wild animals from these forests as compared to earlier. The decreasing number of tiger and panthers has disturbed the food chain. This resulted into increase the number of bison. During summer season the reservoirs are becoming dry, there is lack of green grass for the animals resulting into scarcity of food. The bison and elephants are searching food and water outside forest areas. Forest fires have been increased, in which human created or artificially created forest fire has been increased. This has resulted into destruction of forests and the animals and ecosystems in the forests. Due to these reasons bison and elephants are destroying farms. These situations are more seen in Bhudargad, Radhanagri, Panhala, Ajara, Chandgad. The problem of elephants in Ajara and Chandgad is not new; all time 4 to 6 elephants are existing in Sindhdurg District and Chandgad in Kolhapur District. Elephants travel from Karnataka through Karwar to Doda rout.

In search of food Leopards moved to villages and cities as forest area, grass land, wooded area around cities and villages are vanished While in search of food number of accident incidences recorded. In Nagar and Nasik Division in two years 308 animals found dead .89 wild animals found dead in accident in the two year 2015-2017. 41 wild animals felled in well and found dead. 149 animals died due to heat, hunger, and natural

death. 95 panthers found dead. Panthers changed their habitat from forest to sugarcane field in Nasik, Nagar, Pune and Junnar forest division in Maharashtra. Number of panthers found in Sugarcane areas. Cubs of panther found in the farm at the time of harvesting sugarcane Presently panthers counted and found as under

Division	During 2012	Present Number
Nasik	60	80
Nagar	80	100
Junnar	23	35
Pune	13	17

History of human expansion

On a September morning this year, about 2,000 people carrying sticks and sickles surrounded a sugarcane field on the periphery of Corbett tiger reserve in Uttarakhand to kill a tigress that mauled a woman the previous evening. The tigress, pushed out of India's most densely-populated protected area for big cats by bigger, stronger predators, sneaked into TallaKaniya village looking for prey when it attacked the woman. In a moment, the tigress became public enemy number one of the villagers, as well as the forest department.

The villagers wanted her blood at any cost and the state government obliged by declaring her as a man-eater. They gathered an army of hunters to kill her, but she remained elusive for weeks, even as the state forest department deployed a chopper and drones to track her

down in the fully grown sugarcane fields where she was hiding.

Forty days later and after spending more than 1 crore, the big cat was finally gunned down, much to the joy of the villagers and the forest officials—yet another casualty in the rising human-animal conflict in India.

Data presented in Parliament on November 29 showed that 1,360 people were killed by tigers and elephants in the last three years, higher than human fatalities in Maoist red zones.

This was about a 20-25% increase in human deaths by the two dominant species compared to the previous three years (2010-2013), as the conflict zone spread to new areas in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu and Odisha.

While conflict with tigers and elephants is restricted to smaller towns and villages, it is the leopards that reach the bigger cities faster. This year, they have been spotted in residential areas in Gurgaon, Mumbai, Nainital, Meerut and Bhopal, to name a few.

Ullas Karant, director of the Bangalore-based Centre for Wildlife Studies, said the spread of leopards is five times than that of tigers and that they live in closer human proximity. "As most green areas around cities are vanishing, they have become the poster figure of the conflict." The government, however, does not maintain data on human conflict with leopards, estimated to be around 12,000 to 14,000 in India.

It is not that only people are getting killed. Animals, too, are at the receiving end of this conflict. Data shows that for every four people killed, an endangered animal is also lost. As many as 189 elephants and around 110 tigers were killed in man-conflict zones between 2012 and 2015, according to latest government data. Many animals were captured and summarily sentenced to a life inside enclosures, which animal activists say is the cruelest form of punishment to be given to animals born free.

The cause; The core issue for this rising conflict is the depleting forest cover and growing human presence, in around 650 wildlife zones in the country.

Reports by the Forest Survey of India since early 1990s indicate that around one-third of the dense forest cover has been lost and half the traditional wildlife corridors have disappeared, bringing animals and people dangerously close.

The inviolate tiger area — where animals can move freely without human interference — has shrunk to 31,207 sq. km in 37 tiger reserves, as compared to over one lakh sq. km. in 1970s, when Project Tiger was launched.

"In order to maintain 20 breeding tigresses, a minimum space of 800-1,200 sq. km needs to be kept inviolate, as a core area with an exclusive agenda for tigers," said Rajesh Gopal, former member secretary of the National Tiger

Conservation Authority. "That is becoming difficult with the rising tiger population."

The Tiger Estimation report, 2014, states that around 60% of 2,226 tigers reside outside the most protected core areas, bringing them in direct conflict with around 6,000 villages still in the reserves.

Official data also shows that around 14,000 of the 26,000 elephants in India live close to human habitats in West Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Assam — states that reported most deaths by elephants between 2013 and 2016.

Dipankar Ghose, a wildlife species specialist with an advocacy group, the World Wide Fund (WWF) for nature, said: "The fault is not of the animals as they are in forest areas which were traditionally their habitats. But with then increasing population, many of these green corridors have now been occupied by people. This is a cause for (the) rising conflict."

Solutions: With the human-animal conflict turning into a political issue, states have come out with their own ways to deal with the problem, including relocating man-eating animals to new wildlife zones where the population is less.

One possible solution to the increasing tiger problem – relocation of tigers straying out – was implemented in Assam, where a man-eating tiger from Kaziranga was successfully rehabilitated in the Manas Wildlife Sanctuary.

"If done scientifically, such relocation is possible elsewhere also," said Vivek Menon of the Wildlife Trust of India.

In Kerala, the forest department has constituted primary response teams of locals in all panchayats sharing forest boundaries. Each team is trained in wildlife monitoring, management of conflict situations and crowd control.

In the high-conflict zones of Karnataka, conservation efforts have helped reduce the problem. Karanth said re-developing corridors connecting habitat and sensitizing people on how to deal with animals has helped.

Despite these proven examples of success, the government has often come up with weird ways to check the conflict. The Centre had allowed six states, including Bihar and Himachal, to declare notified wild animals such as blue bulls and monkeys as vermin, meaning people could hunt them freely in permitted areas.

Earlier this year, the West Bengal government dug a 10-km-long trench on its border with Jharkhand, to prevent elephants entering the neighboring state during the May-July migration period. Maharashtra came up with solar-powered electric fence around fields to protect them from elephants.

"Such measures normally fail, as the conflict can be tackled only through conservation," an environment ministry official said.

Birthday Greetings

We wish the following born on the dates mentioned

"A very Happy Birth Day"

S.No.	Name of the member	D.O.B.		
	Sarva Sri			
1.	Satish Chandra	06-12-1939	6.	Binod Kumar Singh 02-01-1964
2.	B.Bhooma Rajam	07-12-1926	7.	G.Nageshwara Rao 10-12-1960
3.	K.Rama Krishna Reddy	08-12-1926	8.	V.Damoder 12-12-1960
4.	Ch.lylaiah	08-12-1949	9.	M.Nagabhushanam 14-12-1964
5.	P.Satyanarayana	10-12-1953	10.	A. Venkateshwarlu 15-12-1968
6.	A.V.Govinda Rajulu	11-12-1945	11.	Dr.B.Prabhakar 16-12-1966
7.	S.D.Mukherji	14-12-1940	12.	M.S.S.Murthy Raju 18-12-1957
8.	T.Shankaraiah	16-12-1931	13.	G.Ravinder 30-12-1958
9.	S.K.Das	17-12-1947	14.	K.Venkata Swamy 01-01-1958
10.	P.Ravinder Reddy	19-12-1946	15.	V.Venkateshwara Rao 01-01-1966
11.	V.Santhasheela Babu	21-12-1947	16.	K.Sudarshan Reddy 02-01-1962
12.	K.Prakash Rao	29-12-1943	17.	V.Tirumala Rao 04-01-1964
13.	G.Raman Goud	01-01-1949	18.	Mrs.V.V.L.Subhadra Devi 03-01-1982
14.	B.Janardhan	02-01-1950	19.	G.Ramalingam 05-01-1966
15.	C.Sudhakar Rao	04-01-1947		
16.	Y.Nageshwar Rao	04-01-1946		
17.	T.Prabhakar Rao	05-01-1942		

S.No.	Name of Serving Officers	D.O.B.
1.	Satish Kumar Kaushik	06-12-1958
2.	Sidhanand Kukreti	19-12-1961
3.	P.V.Raja Rao	20-12-1962
4.	Soumykanta Chottray	24-12-1957
5.	Vipin Choudhary	01-01-1960



SOLVE IF YOU CAN. COLLECTED AND CONTRIBUTED

by
S.G. Varadkar

If you have me, you want to share me. If you share me, you don't have me. What am I?

Answer: A secret.

You're escaping a labyrinth, and there are three doors in front of you. The door on the left leads to a raging inferno. The door in the center leads to a deadly assassin. The door on the right leads to a lion that hasn't eaten in three months. Which door do you choose?

Answer: The door on the right. Explanation: The lion would be dead after not eating for three months.

If I am holding a bee, what do I have in my eye?

Answer: Beauty. Explanation: This riddle is a play on the proverb, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." In this case, you are the "bee-holder." Thus, beauty is in your eye.

An old man dies, leaving behind two sons. In his will, he orders his sons to race with their horses, and the one with the slower horse will receive his inheritance. The two sons race, but since they're both holding their horses back, they go to a wise man and ask him what they should do. After that, the brothers race again — this time at full speed. What did the wise man tell them?

Answer: To switch horses. Explanation: After they switch horses, whoever wins the race will get the inheritance because they still technically own the losing (i.e., slower) horse.

Turn me on my side and I am everything. Cut me in half and I am nothing. What am I?

Answer: The number 8. Explanation: On its side, the number 8 looks like an infinity symbol. Cut in half, the number 8 becomes two zeros.

A farmer needs to take a fox, a chicken, and a sack of grain across a river. The only way across the river is by a small boat, which can only hold the farmer and one of the three items. Left unsupervised, the chicken will eat the grain, and the fox will eat the chicken. However, the fox won't try to eat the grain, and neither the fox nor the chicken will wander off. How does the farmer get everything across the river?

Answer: See below.

Explanation: The farmer must follow these steps.

1. Take the chicken across the river.
2. Come back with an empty boat.
3. Take the grain across the river.
4. Bring the chicken back.
5. Take the fox across the river.
6. Come back with an empty boat.
7. Take the chicken across the river.

If you have a 7-minute hourglass and an 11-minute hourglass, how can you boil an egg in exactly 15 minutes?

Answer: See below. Explanation: To boil the egg in exactly 15 minutes, follow these steps.

1. Start both hourglasses as you start boiling the egg.
2. After the 7-minute hourglass runs out, turn it to start it again.
3. Four minutes later, when the 11-minute hourglass runs out, turn the 7-minute hourglass again.
4. Wait for the 7-minute hourglass to run out, which will take another four minutes and get you to exactly 15 minutes of boiling time.

You are walking down a road and come to a fork. One path leads to certain death; the other leads to eternal happiness. You don't know which is which. In the middle of the fork, you come across two brothers who know which road is which. One brother always tells the truth and the other always lies. You can only ask them one question. How would you determine which road to take? Answer: Ask each brother, "If you were your brother, which road would you say leads to eternal happiness?" Explanation: Let's say the path on the right leads to eternal happiness. After you ask your question, both brothers will tell you the exact same thing: "He would say the left path leads to eternal happiness."

As Reddit user On screen Forecaster explained, "In either case ... you would pick the opposite of what they both say because one is telling the truth about it being a lie, and one is lying about it being the truth."

What is next in this sequence of numbers: 1, 11, 21, 1211, 111221, 312211, _____?

Answer: 13112221.

Explanation: Each sequence of numbers is a verbal representation of the sequence before it. Thus, starting with 1, the next sequence would be "one one," or "11." That sequence is followed by "two one," or "21," and so on and so forth. Still confused? Here's a good explanation by Reddit user hank the tank 921:

The first number is just ONE (amount) "1" (0-9 numeral). So if you say there's ONE "1" (seriously just say it aloud) the next number would be an 11. Then there are TWO "1's", creating 21. Then ONE "2" and ONE "1" which creates 1,211. Then ONE "1", ONE "2", and TWO "1's" creating 111,221 ... and so on.

Four people arrive at a river with a narrow bridge that can only hold two people at a time. It's nighttime and they have one torch that has to be used when crossing the bridge. Person A can cross the bridge in one minute, B in two minutes, C in five minutes, and D in eight minutes. When two people cross the bridge together, they must move at the slower person's pace. Can they all get across the bridge in 15 minutes or less?

Answer: Yes, they can cross in exactly 15 minutes. Explanation: The group of four must follow these steps.

1. First, A and B cross the bridge and A brings the light back. This takes 3 minutes.
2. Next, C and D cross and B brings the light back. This takes another 10 minutes.
3. Finally, A and B cross again. This takes another 2 minutes.

A rebus is a pictogram that represents a word, phrase, or saying. For example, "Ci ii" represents "See eye to eye." What word or phrase does the following rebus represent: O_ER_T_O_?

Answer: Painless operation.

Explanation: The letters missing in O_ER_T_O_ (OPERATION) spell out PAIN. Thus "pain-less" operation.

During a recent census, a man told the census taker that he had three children. When asked their ages, he replied, "The product of their ages is 72. The sum of their ages is the same as my house number." The census taker ran to the man's front door and looked at the house number. "I still can't tell," she complained. The man replied, "Oh that's right, I forgot to tell you that the oldest one likes chocolate pudding." The census taker then promptly wrote down the ages of the three children. How old are they?

Answer: The three kids are 3, 3, and 8 years old.

Explanation: As Reddit users TT1103 and Reddit Rage explained, the key to this brain teaser is that the census taker looks at the house number. In other words, she knows the sum of the children's ages.

However, at that point of the riddle, she still can't tell how old the man's children are. Therefore, she has to be stuck between multiple possibilities. To narrow it down further, only two sets of numbers that multiply to 72 share the

same sum: (2,6,6) and (3,3,8).

After the man reveals that his oldest child likes chocolate pudding, however, the census taker can differentiate between the two options. That is, only the latter of those two sets has a distinct "oldest" child.

You're in a dark room with a candle, a wood stove, and a gas lamp. You only have one match, so what do you light first?

Answer: The match.

There are five bags of gold that all look identical, and each has ten gold pieces in it. One of the five bags has fake gold in it. The real gold, fake gold, and all five bags are identical in every way, except the pieces of fake gold each weigh 1.1 grams, and the real gold pieces each weigh 1 gram. You have a perfectly accurate digital gram scale and can use it only once. How do you determine which bag has the fake gold?

Answer: See below.

Explanation: Take one gold piece from the first bag, two from the second bag, three from the third bag, four from the fourth bag, and five from the fifth bag. If the weight on the scale ends in .1, then you know the first bag has the fake gold. If the weight on the scale ends in .2, then the second bag has the fake gold, and so on and so forth.

Happiness doesn't obey the laws of Mathematics. When you start dividing happiness among others, it actually multiplies. (A.P.J Abdul Kalam)

NEWS AND NOTES

Climate Change Costs a Lot More Than We Recognize:

The latest U.S. government report on climate change illustrates how expensive the phenomenon can be: It estimates that more frequent flooding, more violent hurricanes and more intense wildfires, among other things, have cost the country \$1.1 trillion since 1980.

What's particularly striking, though, is how much the report and others like it are still missing.

For two decades, researchers have been working hard to figure out the potential monetary consequences of climate change. They typically look at things that are relatively easy to measure, such as flood damage from more intense rainfall, real estate losses along coastlines and reduced economic growth. Yet as a new review of the most widely used models points out, they also leave out some pretty big things, such as greater damage from wildfires, worsening water scarcity and the potential for shifting climate patterns to trigger social and political instability by disrupting agriculture and ecology.

Estimating such effects is inherently difficult, but ignoring them is worse. Serious consequences are already evident, in the recent string of U.S. hurricanes and rampant wildfires in California and elsewhere. In West Africa, persistent changes in the amount and timing of rainfall have caused a mass migration, primarily of young men, to Europe and elsewhere. The uprising in Syria came just after a crippling four-year drought caused widespread food shortages. In Europe, a surge of migrants from Syria and elsewhere has played a

significant role in the rise of populist parties and a spreading backlash against democracy. In other words, the U.S. Defense Department was prescient two years ago when it concluded that "climate change is an urgent and growing threat to our national security, contributing to increased natural disasters, refugee flows, and conflicts over basic resources such as food and water." Although climate change hasn't necessarily caused such ills, it has certainly exacerbated them.

The British scientist and journalist Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed has made one of the few attempts to forge a more integrated picture of how climate change, by altering the biosphere, is likely to affect geopolitics. As he notes, the traditional approach is to explain sociopolitical instability by looking at things like national rivalries and competition, political corruption or ideological or religious extremism. We generally ignore or undervalue how deeper biophysical factors, by disrupting the economy or putting increased stress on fragile relationships, can trigger or amplify instability.

As global carbon dioxide levels keep rising, such sociopolitical effects may ultimately comprise the biggest costs of climate change. We're in a moment not unlike the years just prior to the 2008 financial crisis, when many people recognized that the housing market had entered dangerously unstable territory, but failed to see the potential repercussions for the

economy and society at large — repercussions that we're still experiencing.

What was missing then was a full appreciation of the linkages between finance and the economy. Now we're suffering from a similar blindness to the biosphere's fundamental role in supporting human well-being.

Global atmospheric CO2 levels hit record

high: -The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increased at record speed last year to hit a level not seen for more than three million years, the UN has warned.

The new report has raised alarm among scientists and prompted calls for nations to consider more drastic emissions reductions at the upcoming climate negotiations in Bonn.

"Globally averaged concentrations of CO2 reached 403.3 parts per million (ppm) in 2016, up from 400.00 ppm in 2015 because of a combination of human activities and a strong El Niño event," according to The Greenhouse Gas Bulletin, the UN weather agency's annual flagship report.

This acceleration occurred despite a slowdown – and perhaps even a plateauing – of emissions because El Niño intensified droughts and weakened the ability of vegetation to absorb carbon dioxide. As the planet warms, El Niños are expected to become more frequent.

The increase of 3.3 ppm is considerably higher than both the 2.3 ppm rise of the previous 12 months and the average annual increase over the past decade of 2.08ppm. It is also well above the previous big El Niño year of 1998, when the rise was 2.7 ppm.

The study, which uses monitoring ships, aircraft and stations on the land to track emissions trends since 1750, said carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is now increasing 100 times faster than at the end of the last ice age due to population growth, intensive agriculture, deforestation and industrialization.

The last time Earth experienced similar CO2 concentration rates was during the Pliocene era (three to five million years ago), when the sea level was up to 20m higher than now.

Advertisement

The authors urged policymakers to step up countermeasures to reduce the risk of global warming exceeding the Paris climate target of between 1.5C and 2C.

"Without rapid cuts in CO2 and other greenhouse gas emissions, we will be heading for dangerous temperature increases by the end of this century, well above the target set by the Paris climate change agreement," World Meteorological Organization chief Petteri Taalas said in a statement.

The momentum from the Paris accord in 2015 is faltering due to the failure of national governments to live up to their promises. In a report to be released on Tuesday, UN Environment will show the gap between international goals and domestic commitments leaves the world on course for warming well beyond the 2C target and probably beyond 3C. International efforts to act have also been weakened by US President Donald Trump's decision to quit the accord.

Prof Dave Reay, professor of carbon

management at the University of Edinburgh, said: "This should set alarm bells ringing in the corridors of power. We know that, as climate change intensifies, the ability of the land and oceans to mop up our carbon emissions will weaken. There's still time to steer these emissions down and so keep some control, but if we wait too long humankind will become a passenger on a one-way street to dangerous climate change."

"The numbers don't lie. We are still emitting far too much and this needs to be reversed," the head of UN Environment Erik Solheim said in reaction to the new report. "What we need now is global political will and a new sense of urgency."

The report comes amid growing concerns that nature's ability to deal with CO₂ is weakening.

Recent studies show forest regions are being cleared and degraded so rapidly that they are now emitting more carbon than they absorb.

"These large increase show it is more important than ever to reduce our emissions to zero – and as soon as possible," said Piers Forster, director of the Priestley International Centre for Climate at the University of Leeds. "If vegetation can no longer help out absorbing our emissions in these hot years we could be in trouble."

The World Meteorological Organization predicted 2017 will again break records for concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane, but the growth rate will not be as fast because there is no El Niño effect.

The sea is likely to swallow these parts of Chennai by 2100: - The Velachery MRTS, the Perungudi dump yard, TCS, Tech Mahindra, Wipro and HCL buildings – these are but a few examples of crucial landmarks in south Chennai that will cease to exist by the year 2100, if we do not act now.

According to a 2012 'Coastal Zones of India' report prepared by Ahmedabad-based Satellite Application Centre (SAC), an unit of Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), Tamil Nadu is set to lose 3,209.33 sq km of coastal area prone to submergence if the sea level rises by even one meter.

A graphic representation of maps provided by, SAC highlights portions that are likely to be submerged in blue. The red portions indicate areas that may be affected when there is a high tide.

According to environmentalists, the sea water will make its way into low lying areas through river mouths and make the lands uninhabitable. So why is this report relevant now?

The Tamil Nadu government plans to release a Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) and it must ideally account for Sea Level Rise (SLR). It should also contain the mandatory hazard line, long-term plans for fisher housing and prospective land-use. According to the Coastal Resource Centre, the state should have released the CZMP in 2012 but failed to. And despite ISRO's dire warnings, the government has allowed densification of industrial installations and urban sprawl in vulnerable coastal areas.

"Climate change and sea level rise are real and

present dangers. The CZMP offers an opportunity to plan for the decongesting of the coast. Other countries are doing that. We must start retreating from the sea and improving our natural safeguards against extreme sea-borne events," says Pooja Kumar of Coastal Resource Centre.

As per the submergence maps contained in the SAC's report, Chennai stands to lose 3.11 sq. km of critical industrial infrastructure, almost all in the Ennore region.

NTECL Vallur, all of TANGEDCO's power plants in Ennore, Kamarajar Port's existing and proposed infrastructure inside the Creek, HPCL and BPCL's oil terminals, the Minjur desalination plant and portions of CPCL's petrochemical refinery in Manali will be swallowed by the sea.

"That is not all," warns Pooja. "The groundwater resources of Araniyar-Kosasthalaiyar basin will be degraded due to tidal ingress and this will affect the entire city," she adds.

To make matters worse, both the Kodungaiyur and Perungudidumpyards are likely to be submerged. "So the city will literally drown in trash," says Pooja

The proposed petroleum refinery and Petrochemical Investment Region in Cuddalore and Nagapattinam, industrial installations and salt pans in Tuticorin and the Koodankulam nuclear reactors are located in vulnerable areas that are prone either to submergence or degradation due to tidal action.

"All this will happen by 2100 and it won't be sudden. It will be gradual and is already in motion. So we cannot sit back and leave it for the next generations to handle," says Pooja.

Climate change could force more than a billion people to flee their homes, says major health report: More than a billion people could be forced to flee their homes because of global warming, according to new research.

The movement of people, as well as the various effects of climate change, could be about to trigger a major health crisis, according to a new study from *The Lancet*.

Global warming is already leading some to conclude the climate-change migrants are being forced to move because of extreme changes in the amount of rain and temperature changes destroying their ability to farm. It notes that some have blamed the Syrian conflict on migration into the cities that was caused by a drought that seems to have been induced by climate change.

It notes that "migration driven by climate change has potentially severe impacts on mental and physical health, both directly and through the disruption of essential health and social services".

That is the conclusion of the sweeping new research, which brings together a range of different studies looking at the health impacts of climate change. It suggests that the possible impact of those changes on people's health could be vast – and that governments must act quickly to clean up the air and address environmental problems before they begin to kill people.

The study concludes that people can adapt to some of the less dramatic changes. But there

are powerful limits to the amount people can adapt, it says – and so governments need to work hard both to mitigate the effects of climate change and help people adapt to them, in an attempt to deal with that health crisis.

It says that if those recommendations are taken up, it could avoid the disasters that it sees in the future. “The indicators reveal some stark warnings for human health as well as some glimmers of hope,” said Dr. Clare Goodess, a senior researcher at the Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia.

The impact of air pollution in UK cities forms part of a major investigation looking at the health and social costs of climate change around the world led by a top medical journal.

The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change brought together 24 institutions and inter-governmental organizations including the WHO and World Meteorological Organization.

It found that global exposure to dangerous levels of air pollution caused by burning fossil fuels had increased by 11.2 per cent since 1990 with more than 70 per cent of cities exceeding WHO PM2.5 limits.

Many British cities and towns also broke the WHO limits for PM10s, slightly larger sooty specks considered less of a hazard than ultra-fine particles but still harmful to health.

The authors acknowledged that European Union air quality guidelines were far less stringent than those of the WHO, with an upper safety limit for PM2.5s of 25 micrograms per cubic meter.

However, they said the WHO limits represented a “safer threshold”

The report added that 802 London schools and a high proportion of the capital’s hospitals and clinics were located in highly polluted areas “potentially putting some of society’s most vulnerable people at risk”.

Diesel-powered vehicles, which generate pollution particles, were one of the “key drivers” of poor air quality in towns and cities in the UK, said Dr. Hillman.

“Unfortunately previous policies about encouraging diesel adoption have led to an increase in the amount of diesel related pollution,” he said.

In a “briefing for UK policymakers” the report called for the expansion of Clean Air Zones nationwide and wider introduction of measures similar to London’s new T-charge, which imposes a levy on drivers of the most polluting vehicles.

The report pointed out that between 2000 and 2016 there had been a 46 per cent increase in the number of weather-related disasters around the world. During the same period of time 125 million vulnerable adults over the age of 65 had been exposed to heat waves.

In addition, climate change had increased the threat from mosquito-borne infectious diseases.

Transmission of dengue fever by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito had increased by 9.4 per cent since 1950.

Professor Hugh Montgomery, co-chair of The Lancet Countdown and director of the Institute for Human Health and Performance at University College London, said: “We are only

just beginning to feel the impacts of climate change.

"Any small amount of resilience we may take for granted today will be stretched to breaking point sooner than we may imagine."

Used Plastic Plates in Your Wedding? This Kerala Village Will Withhold Your Marriage Certificate!

While these green norms set by the panchayat were only applicable to wedding feasts, the rules were later extended to almost all events that see over 100 guests in attendance. Imagine not being issued your marriage certificate if you serve your guests food on plastic plates! The Kolad panchayat in Kannur district of Kerala is taking its green weddings mission one step ahead with new rules, after its initiative '*Maalinyamillatha Mangalyam*' which translates to no-waste weddings, became a huge success. While these green norms set by the panchayat were only applicable to wedding feasts, the rules were later extended to almost all events that see over 100 guests in attendance. The protocol is to fill out a form and submit an application to the panchayat. The rationale is to avoid environmental damage due to the increased usage of plastic and other disposable waste items. The stringent rules slap a fine of Rs. 10,000 on organizers who do not inform the panchayat of an event which caters to more than 100 guests. A smooth sailing event and a marriage certificate in hand are ensured only when the panchayat monitors that the green protocol has been followed. All newly-wed couples and event organizers who comply with the norms will be awarded a memento by the

panchayat. But the road to setting these rules and ensuring compliance wasn't easy, most people protested. But most of their crockery related worries were resolved by the '*HarithakarmaSena*,' who provides plantain leaves and steel plates and glasses.

Farm animals cause climate problems, warns new report :

Grazing livestock are linked to climate change. They can boost the sequestration of carbon in some locally specific circumstances. At the global level, they are responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, directly linked to global warming. The conclusion: Eat less meat and dairy products.

These startling findings were made public recently after two years of a collaboration study by researchers led by Tara Garnett of the Food Climate Research Network at the University of Oxford. Cecile Godde at Australia's national science agency, the CSIRO, is one of the authors. The study, which aims to help minimize carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through grazing actions, holds relevance for India too as it supports one of world's largest populations of grass-fed livestock, ranked number one in milk production.

The report "Grazed and Confused?" says grass-fed livestock are not a climate change solution. They are, in fact, net contributors to the climate problem, as are all livestock.

The cattle emit gases such as nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide and methane, a particularly potent greenhouse gas, and contribute the majority share of total agricultural greenhouse

gas emissions.

Rising animal production and consumption, whatever the farming system and animal type, is causing greenhouse gas release and contributing to changes in land use.

Ultimately, if high-consuming individuals and countries want to do something positive for the climate, maintaining their current consumption levels but simply switching to grass-fed beef is not a solution.

"Eating less meat, of all types, is (a solution)," advocates report lead author Garnett.

Published just ahead of the Bonn UN Climate Change Conference, the report places emphasis on the need to consider animal production and meat consumption if the world aims to keep a global average temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius.

"When thinking about different livestock production systems, there are many important aspects to consider: people's livelihoods and jobs, animal welfare, biodiversity, nutrition and food security and more," Garnett said.

"Grazing systems and grass-fed beef may offer benefits in these respects, benefits that will vary by context. But when it comes to climate change, people shouldn't assume that their grass-fed steak is a climate change-free lunch. It isn't," she added.

The 127-page report estimates the livestock sector as a whole is responsible for 14.5 per cent of global human-related global greenhouse emissions, making the increasing demand for meat and dairy foods extremely problematic "if we are to limit global warming to below the

internationally agreed goal of 2 degrees."

However, both consumers and policymakers have a much looser grasp on the differences in climate impact among different types of livestock.

"The big question that needs answering is whether farmed animals fit in a sustainable food system, and if so, which farming systems and species are to be preferred," said environmental and agricultural scientist Godde.

"Of course, there are many dimensions to sustainability and this report only considers one of them — the climate question. But this question alone is important to explore, and this report takes us a step further towards understanding what a sustainable food system looks like," she said.

The report concludes that although there can be other benefits to grazing livestock — solving climate change isn't one of them. IANS

Call for urgent action. Time running out to save planet, 15,000 scientists warn in a letter: - Time is running out to save the Earth, according to the largest ever group of scientists globally who warned today that urgent action must be taken to avoid substantial and irreversible harm to the planet.

Twenty-five years ago, a majority of the world's living Nobel Laureates united to sign a warning letter about the Earth.

Today, scientists have taken grassroots action, with a scorecard showing that out of nine areas only one has improved: our ozone. The article, "World Scientists' Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice", has been co-signed by over

15,000 scientists in 184 countries and was published today in the journal Bio Science.

According to Thomas Newsome, a research fellow at Daikin University and The University of Sydney in Australia, this was possibly the biggest number of signatories to any published scientific paper. "It is an overwhelming response we did not quite expect," said Newsome.

The initial warning 25 years ago identified trends that needed to be reversed to curtail environmental destruction, including ozone depletion, forest loss, climate change and human population growth.

"In this paper we look back on these trends and evaluate the subsequent human response by exploring the available data," Newsome said.

The research article highlighted the negative 25-year global trends, including a 26 per cent reduction in the amount of fresh water available per capita and a loss of nearly 300 million acres of forestland.

It also noted that there has been a collective 29 per cent reduction in the numbers of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds and fish and a 75 per cent increase in the number of ocean dead zones.

The research article states there is still time but notes the areas that need to be improved, including promoting dietary shifts away from meat, encouraging the adoption of renewable energy and limiting human population growth. PTI

At dangerous level: - A thick cloud of toxic smog 10 times the recommended limit enveloped India's capital New Delhi on Monday,

as government officials struggled to tackle a public health crisis that is well into its second week.

A U.S. embassy measure showed levels of poisonous airborne particles, known as PM 2.5, had reached 495 on Monday morning, compared with the upper limit of "good" quality air at 50.

India's weather office said forecast rain over the next three days could help clear the smog.

Prashant Gargava, an official at the Central Pollution Control Board, a federal body, who is in-charge of monitoring air quality, said Delhi's air has been consistently in the "hazardous" zone, despite measures such as a halt to construction and increasing car parking charges four-fold to encourage people to use public transportation.

The PM 2.5 airborne particles are about 30 times finer than a human hair. The particles can be inhaled deep into the lungs, causing respiratory diseases and other ailments. Hospitals in the capital have seen a spike in the number of patients coming in with respiratory complaints, according to media reports.

State and federal governments decided to reopen schools on Monday after closing them temporarily for a few days last week. The move, however, is likely to add more vehicles on the road. Enforcement agencies said they were also unable to impose a blanket ban on movement of commercial trucks.

The National Green Tribunal, an environment court, has directed the Delhi government and neighbouring states to stop farmers from

burning crop residue. But the federal and state governments have not been able to do so yet. Who is to blame?

India's failure to implement emission control standards for coal-fired power plants is the reason behind this severe level.

Close to 40 per cent of winter-time pollution has been attributed to crop fires, coal-fired power plants and industries spread across the National Capital Region (NCR).

"The national capital has 13 coal-fired power plants in 300-km radius operating with no emission controls to regulate sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide which contribute to a surge in particulate matter levels," environmental researcher AishwaryaSudhir told IANS.

Blaming failure of Delhi's Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), which is designed to control air pollution, she said the capital had failed to make any difference to the severe pollution levels being witnessed by the citizens.

The World Health Organization in 2014 classified New Delhi as the world's most polluted capital, with air quality levels worse than Beijing; and it appears that now in 2017 the situation has worsened multiple-fold. Delhi's air quality is usually known to worsen ahead of the onset of winter as the cool air traps pollutants near the ground, preventing them from dispersing into the atmosphere, a phenomenon known as inversion.

While Delhi has always had its fair share of pollutants attributed to the exploding vehicular population. (What can you expect if 1,400 new vehicles are added to the roads every single day?)

According to government statistics, the total number of vehicles in Delhi exceeded 10 million for the first time in 2016. There is official apathy to keep a check on vehicular emissions; and the problem is exacerbating because of the stubble burning by the farmers.

Why be concerned only about the children and the aged?

The microscopic particles, which are smaller than 2.5 micrometers in diameter, are considered harmful because they are small enough to lodge deep into the lungs and pass into other organs, causing serious health risks to even a normal human being.

Retailers selling air purifiers are making merry as sales have surged significantly. People are moving about with masks and scarves over their nose, hoping that it could bring respite. Agencies

Thank you flies! : - There are 17 million flies in the world and many do enormous service for us and the planet by cleaning up all sorts of the biological world's detritus, from dead wood to the slime in drainpipes.

For each person on earth, there are 17 million flies. They pollinate plants, consume decomposing bodies, eat the sludge in your drainpipes, damage crops, spread disease, kill spiders, and hunt dragonflies.

Some have even lost their wings so as to live exclusively on bat blood, spending their lives scuttling about the fur of their hosts, leaving only to give birth to a single larva — usually.

"That's why I love them. They do everything. They get everywhere. They're noisy." said Erica

McAlister, a curator of Diptera at the Museum of Natural History in London.

No chocolate without them!

Without them, to take just one example, there would be no chocolate. Dr. McAlister herself hates chocolate, but she is fond of the kind of flies that pollinate the cacao plant — a variety of biting midge. The midges are tiny, mostly blood-feeding insects, but the chocolate midges like nectar and carry pollen from one plant to another.

Many flies do an enormous service for us and the planet by cleaning up all sorts of the biological world's detritus, from dead wood to the slime in drainpipes. Drain flies, or sewer gnats, are actually cleaning up human mess. Occasionally, however, they may have a population boom that sends the adults into the air, which is annoying; if the bodies disintegrate into tiny particles in the air, they are potentially harmful to human health. And, of course, there are the flies that feed on dead bodies — the 1,100 different species of blow flies, favorites of forensic detective shows. The maggots of these flies, like the very attractive bluebottle larva, devour corpses of mice and men and everything else.

In lab study

Within science, flies are one of the great subjects of laboratory study. Or rather, the fly: *Drosophila melanogaster*, commonly known as the fruit fly, although Dr. McAlister points out it actually belongs to a group called the vinegar flies.

They are easy to work with and share the same basic DNA as all life. Historically, they have provided much of the foundation for modern

genetics. And now they may provide deep insights into neuroscience and other fields.

How flies think

Scientists at the Salk Institute reported that their studies of how the fly brain works can improve Internet search engines. At the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Janelia Research Institute in Virginia, the search is on to develop a wiring diagram of the fly brain, and then figure out in the greatest detail how they think.

And they do think, according to Vivek Jayaraman, who runs a lab there, in the sense that flies don't just react instinctively. Their brains make decisions based on several different inputs — smell, memory, hunger and fear, for instance. And that whole process is what he hopes to decipher, neuron by neuron. "You can go end to end, potentially, in the fly," he said.

There are 160,000 known species of fly, and entomologists can only guess at the number we don't know — it's somewhere between hundreds of thousands and millions.

Appearance and behavior

Flies can be startling in their appearance as well as their behavior. One Middle Eastern fruit fly has patterns on its wings that look something like spiders. No one knows why. Another fly, *Achiasrothschildi*, must swallow air to inflate its eye stalks when it first emerges as an adult.

There are Dr. McAlister notes in her book, limits to even her affinity for flies. Houseflies, for instance, may be affected by climate change. According to one projection, the population could increase by 244 percent by 2080.

Presumably, many flies will also suffer with

climate change. A recent paper looking at all insects reported an apparent decline that may already be linked to global warming.

There are countless mysteries remaining in the fly world — big ones, like how many species of flies there really are, and more limited ones, like the insect with the big orange head, the bone skipper fly. It eats carcasses, but only ones that have been picked over, and comes out at night in the winter. It was thought to be extinct until it was rediscovered a few years ago. The New York Times

CO2 emissions set to rise after period of stability, according to research: Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from industry and fossil fuels are projected to rise by 2 percent this year researchers said Monday. The increase comes after a period of almost no growth between 2014 and 2016, according to the Global Carbon Project's Global Carbon Budget 2017 report. With its use of coal increasing, China's emissions were projected to rise by 3.5 percent. Emissions in the U.S. were projected to decline by 0.4 percent, although coal use is to rise slightly. Atmospheric CO2 concentration was expected to rise by 2.5 parts per million in 2017. Lead researcher Corinne Le Quere, director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia (UEA) in England, said: "Global CO2 emissions appear to be going up strongly once again after a three-year stable period. This is very disappointing." Under the Paris climate agreement, reached at the end of 2015, world leaders committed to making sure global

warming stays "well below" two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and to "pursue efforts" to limit the temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Le Quere said that with global CO2 emissions from human activities estimated at 41 billion tonnes for 2017, time was running out "on our ability to keep warming well below" the two degrees Celsius target, let alone 1.5 degrees. "This year we have seen how climate change can amplify the impacts of hurricanes with more intense rainfall, higher sea levels and warmer ocean conditions favoring more powerful storms," she added. "This is a window into the future. We need to reach a peak in global emissions in the next few years and drive emissions down rapidly afterwards to address climate change and limit its impacts." The research was simultaneously published in the journals Nature Climate Change, Earth System Science Data Discussions and Environmental Research Letters.

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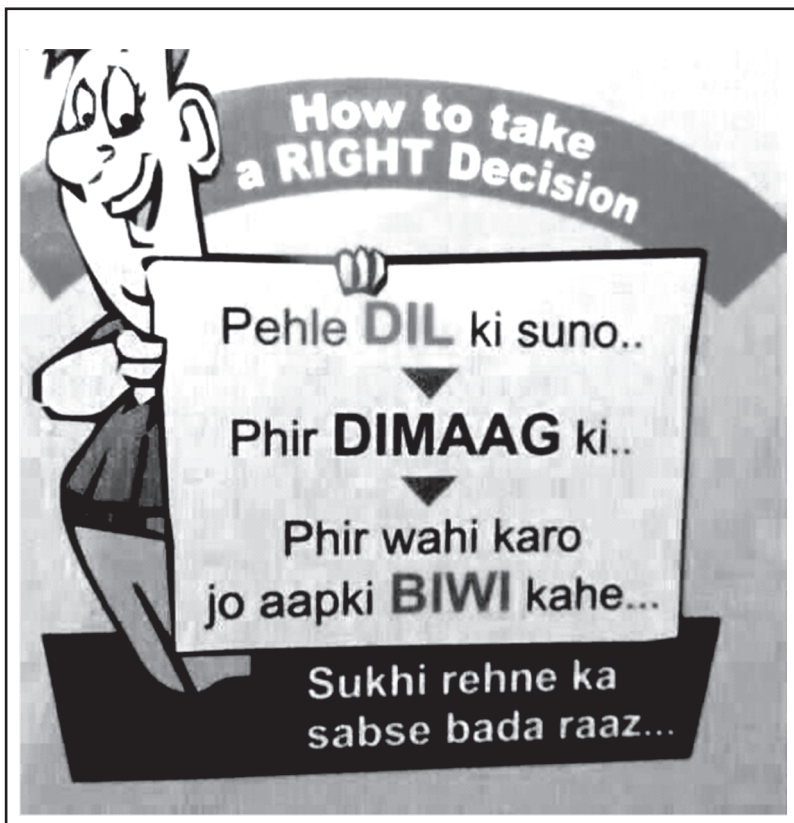
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‘HUGE BLESSINGS IN SMALL VIRTUES’

By

Maj Gen SPS Narang (Retd)

Like a large percentage of secular Indians, I have an incident to share which may awaken the conscience of some of my fellow men.

The incident goes back to nearly a year, and even now evokes poignancy in my heart

Last November, I was driving back to Dehradun from Chandigarh — a fascinating four-hour journey, with the added attraction of visiting *Paonta Sahib Gurdwara*. I had to break on the way to give myself and my car some rest. And what better than entering the abode of the Guru. Besides the soothing *kirtan*, it is the *langar* that one savors, seated on the floor among a multitude of people from all walks of life. Some partake of all meals as they have no means to satiate their hunger.

Breaking bread with them gives an indescribable spiritual high, and to experience this, one doesn't have to belong to any one religion. I, too, enjoyed the *langar* and came out to get on with my journey.

I stopped to buy some knick-knacks from a kiosk outside the *gurdwara*. Just then, I spotted a family of *Gujjars* (Muslims nomads who rear cattle in semi mountains and sell milk), in an intent discussion in front of a tea vendor. The family comprised an elderly couple, two middle-aged couples and four children. Three women were partially veiled. They seemed poor as the eldest gentleman (probably the father) counted coins and some crumpled notes.

Undoubtedly, the issue was how much they could afford to buy. They asked for three cups of tea and four samosas (popular Indian snack).

Gathering courage, I asked him, "*Kya aap sab khana khayenge?*" (Would you all like to have food!!) They looked at one another with a mix of surprise, apprehension and a hurt self-respect. There was silence. Sometimes, silence can be loud. The innocent eyes of the kids were filled with hope. "*Hum khake aaaye hain,*" (we have eaten already) he responded.

There was an instant retort, "*Kahan khayaa hai subeh se kuchbhi, Abba?*" (We have not eaten anything since morning, Papa!!).

Hearing that, a dull ache in my chest caught me by surprise. The stern look in the eyes of the three men and the pleading moist eyes of the women said it all.

I insisted that they come with me. They agreed, reluctantly. We entered the *gurdwara* (Sikh Temple of God)

A good feeling descended over me as I deposited their shoes at the *joraghar* (Shoe deposit room in all *Gurdwaras*). The elders were awed by the architectural marvel.

However, there was fear in their eyes, which was understandable. They were entering a non-Islamic place of worship for the first time.

But the children couldn't care less, their innocent faces single-mindedly focused on food. Some onlookers flashed strange looks

from the corner of their eyes. But then I followed the children, adopting their easy attitude as they excitedly chose head wraps of different colors. (Everyone is supposed to cover their heads inside a *Gurdwara*).

Except for the eldest member, all accompanied me inside and emulating me, bowed their heads and touched their forehead to the floor. Many others must have noticed, as I did, that these children went through this ritual with utmost reverence. They took *Parshad* (offering) from the *Bhaiji* (The Priest) who asked them if they needed more. The children gladly nodded.

We entered the *Langar* Hall and I took the kids along to collect *thaalis* (plates).

They did it with joy, like only kids would. Seated opposite us was a newly-married couple. The bride, with red bangles accentuating her charm, asked the children to sit beside her, and two of them sat between them. The way she was looking after them, I could tell she would make a loving mother.

Langar was served, and though I had already eaten, I ate a little to make my guests comfortable. One had to see to believe how they relished it. The initial apprehension had vanished and they ate to their fill. I have no words to describe the joy I experienced.

We had nearly finished when an elderly Sikh and a youth with flowing beard (perhaps the head *granthi* and *sewadar*-helper) sought me out.

I was overcome by fear, and more than me, my guests were scared. I walked up to them with folded hands.

He enquired, "*Inhaan nu tusi le ke aaye ho?* (Have you brought them in?)" I nodded.

The next question had me baffled, "*Tusihar din*

path karde ho?(Do you say prayers every day?)" I almost blurted "yes", but it would have been a lie. So, with utmost humility I said "no".

Expecting an admonishment, he surprised me, "*Tuhaanu tha koi lorh hi nahin. Ajtuhaanu sab kuch mil gaya hai ji*(You don't need to. Today you have got everything)." I was flabbergasted. Was it advice or sarcasm? He added, "*Inha nu Babbe de ghar lya ke te langar shaka ke tusi sab kuchpaalaya. Tuhaadadhanwad. Assidhan ho gaye* (By bringing them to the Guru's abode for *langar*, you've got everything from God. Thank you. We are blessed)."

Then, with folded hands, he walked up to the elderly couple and requested them, "*Aap jad bhi idha raao to langar khake jaaiye. Yeh to uparwale da diya hai ji*(Whenever you happen to pass through here, please come and have food. It is God's gift)."

I escorted my guests out of the *Langar* Hall. Just as we were about to pick our footwear, one of the children said, "*Humme aur halwa do naa.*" (Get us some more, sweet offering). We five went in to get more *parshad*.

Finally, as they were about to depart, the elderly lady whispered to her husband.

I enquired, "*Koi baat, Miyaji?*" (Is there any problem, Mianji).

Almost pleadingly, he said, "*Yeh keh rahin ki, kya aap ke sar par haath rakh sakti hain?* (She is saying can she keep her hand on your head)!! I bowed as she blessed me with tears in her eyes. A wave of emotions swept over me.

Is it my imagination, or for real, that I often feel the beautiful hand of a Muslim lady, wrapped in purity and love, on my head?

This is the reason, we are secular....

MY WIFE DOES NOT WORK!!!

Conversation between a Husband (H) and a Psychologist (P)

P: What do you do for a living Mr. Bandy?

H: I work as an Accountant in a Bank.

P: Your Wife?

H: She doesn't work. She's a Housewife only.

P: Who makes breakfast for your family in the morning?

H: My Wife, because she doesn't work.

P: At what time does your wife wake up for making breakfast?

H: She wakes up at around 5 am because she cleans the house first before making breakfast.

P: How do your kids go to school?

*H: My wife takes them to school, because she doesn't work.

P: After taking your kids to school, what does she do?

H: She goes to the market, then goes back home for cooking and laundry. You know, she doesn't work.

P: In the evening, after you go back home from office, what do you do?

H: Take rest, because I'm tired after work.

P: What does your wife do then?

H: She prepares meals, serves our kids, prepares meals for me and cleans the dishes, cleans the

house then takes the kids to bed.

The daily routines of your wives commence from early morning to late night.

That is called 'DOESN'T WORK??!!'*

Being Housewives do not need Certificate of Study but their ROLE is very important!

Appreciate your wives.

Because their sacrifices are uncountable

This should be a reminder and reflection for all of us to understand and appreciate each-others roles.

Someone asked her.....

Are you a working woman or a house-wife?

She Replied: Yes I am a full timeworking house-wife. I work 24 hours a day.....

I'm a "mum", I'm a wife, I'm a daughter, I'm a daughter-in-law.....

I'm an Alarm clock, I'm a Cook, I'm a Maid, I'm a Teacher, I'm a waiter, I'm a nanny, I'm a nurse, I'm a handyman, I'm a Security officer, I'm a Counsellor, I'm a comforter,

I don't get holidays, I don't get sick leave, I don't get day off.....

I work through day and night.....

I'm on call.....

All hours and get paid with a sentence.....

"What do you do all day". (Dedicated to all women)

Life is best for those who are enjoying it...Difficult for those who are comparing it....Worst for those who are criticizing it....Your own attitude defines your life... So enjoy life for each moment. (A.P.J Abdul Kalam)

LEGAL NOTES

Union of India Vs. Zavaray S. Poonawala & others

This is an interesting case in which the duties and responsibilities of Wildlife Authorities, Customs Authorities and Authorities of Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) under the relevant laws have been explained by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The question involved was hunting wild animals in Zambia and importing of trophies therefrom.

Zavaray S. Poonawala, Respondent. I in the case, went to Zambia on a hunting spree and he got prepared trophies of hunted animals. There was problem regarding import into India a trophy of Leopard. Leopard is a protected and prohibited species under schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and also under the Cites. Permission under Cites was refused. He therefore approached High Court of Delhi and the High Court by its order dt. 28.04.2013 had come to the conclusion that the authorities which were required to give permission had accorded due permission to Respondent I and further that in such circumstances Cites had no locus to entertain the application or to reject it. The writ petition was accordingly allowed.

Respondent I made his application on 27-04-2002 to the Regional Deputy Director (Wildlife Protection) for granting permission to import of stuffed leopard into India. The application was rejected on the ground that clearance and certificate from the Director General Foreign Trade (DGFT) and Cites were necessary.

On 23-07-2002 permission was granted by the

Joint Director (DGFT) in the form of a license and it was stated that the applicant must obtain clearance and certificate from DGFT and Cites Authorities. Cites asserted that it is for the authority under the Cites to regulate the export and import of species as set out in Appendix I of Cites. Upon this the DGFT issued a show cause notice to Respondent I under section 124 of the Customs Act, 1962 for confiscation of the aforesaid trophy. The defense of Respondent was that it is the Chief Wildlife Warden under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 who was the competent authority to grant permission and he submitted that he obtained the necessary permission of the said authority.

Upon receipt of the show cause notice from the Customs Department the Respondent filed Writ Petition in the High Court which was allowed, as mentioned above on 2 counts; in the first place it is observed that the competent authorities to grant the permission were DGFT and the Chief Wildlife Warden and the Respondent had the requisite permissions from these two authorities. Secondly, in the opinion of the High Court, CITES had no role to play and did not have any locus to examine the issue of permission. As per the order of High Court, the only role of CITES is to see that the imported item is not used for commercial purposes.

Against the order of the High Court, the Union of India through Regional Deputy Director Wildlife Protection filed Civil Appeal No. 7130/2003 in the Supreme Court. The matter was

heard by a DB comprising Justice Dr. A.K. Sikri and Justice Mr. Robinton Fali Nariman. After hearing the counsel for the parties at length, the Hon'ble Court was of the opinion that the High Court fell into error on both the counts. The permissions granted were conditional. Apart from many conditions imposed, the most material condition, which has been ignored by the High Court, was that those permissions were subject to the approval of Cites and insofar as Cites is concerned, it had not given any permission. On the contrary a letter issued on 01-11-2002 was treated as show cause notice. The conditions imposed by the DGFT and the Chief Wildlife Warden were not met by Respondent.

Their Lordships adverted to the role and jurisdiction of Cites, which it has to play in such circumstances, which is stated in the convention and it was signed at Washington DC in 1973 and 1979. India is a signatory of the convention. Their Lordships also emphasized the need for conservation of nature including forests, wildlife and environment which is extracted below:

"14. As a result of indiscriminate killing of the animals and birds by human beings, either for its flesh or for trade or as a matter of hobby, several species of animals/birds have virtually become extinct. To curb the ecological imbalance caused by the ruthless killings of the animals and birds various legislations have been enacted by several countries worldwide, to protect the lives of the endangered species of animals and birds and also curb the international trade in live animals/birds or their products.

15. Saving wild life is a core responsibility of mankind. Animal populations are disappearing

at an alarming rate. Saving endangered species (plants and animals) from becoming extinct and protecting their wild places is crucial for our health and the future of our children. Man has produced a thousand and one inventions while observing Nature. Think of Leonardo da Vinci, who drew flying machines as he watched the flight of bats. In the area of human health, animals and plants often show us the way to stay in shape. As species are lost it impacts the possibility of future discovery and advancement. The impacts of biodiversity loss include clearly into fewer new medicines, greater vulnerability to natural disasters and greater effects from global warming. In Nature, everything is interconnected. Unfortunately, we often have very little idea of all the repercussions involved in the disappearance of a single animal population in a corner of a forest, swamp or river. Unrecognised benefits of maintaining biological diversity are those services we receive when ecosystems function normally. These ecosystem functions include energy fixation, chemical cycling (oxygen production by rainforests), soil generation and maintenance, ground water recharge, water purification, and flood protection. These services are provided to us at no cost. When we destroy the ability of ecosystems to function naturally, we not only lose these free services but all too often have to pay to replace them.

16. Protecting these species contributes to a thriving, healthy planet for people's health and well being. Wild Life nurtures a sense of wonder. It is integral to maintain the balance of Nature. Ultimately, by protecting these species, we save this beautiful, vulnerable and utterly

irreplaceable planet we call home. By protecting species, we also protect the essential goods and services that make our lives possible and contribute enormously to human health and well being — breathable air, clean water, food, fibres, building materials, medicines, energy, fertile soils, climate regulation, transport, and recreational and spiritual values. We are on a mission to find solutions that save the marvellous array of life on our planet.

17. If a species goes extinct, it's lost forever. Any aesthetic value it once had is gone. As Theodore Roosevelt said, "When I hear of the destruction of a species, I feel just as if all the works of some great writer have perished."

18. The leopard, *Panthera pardus*, is a member of the felidae family. This secretive and elusive large cat was once distributed across Eastern and Southern Asia and Africa. Now at the centre of a severe man-animal conflict because of expanding agricultural practices and development projects, its habitat has depleted to mostly sub-Saharan Africa and fragmented populations in Asia (Stuart, 2007). As one of South Africa's "Big Five", the leopard forms a lucrative part of South Africa's economy being a favourite to both the tourist and hunting industries. The ecological importance of this animal lies in its position at the top of the food chain in most ecosystems. The shooting of wild game purely for sport and trophies is no longer compatible with our commitment to preserve local fauna as a national treasure.

The leopard, *Panthera pardus*, was listed in Appendix I in 1975, as part of an overall move to protect spotted cats from commercial trade in their skins. Therefore, international trade in it or

its products for primarily commercial purposes was prohibited. However, it has been recognised that killing of specimens may be sanctioned by countries of export in defence of life and property and to enhance the survival of the species. Furthermore, this resolution also recognised that the leopard was not endangered in several African countries. Equally, this resolution recognised the overwhelming desire of parties not to re-open a commercial market in leopard skins....."

The Hon'ble Supreme Court discussed in detail the provisions of the Cites. In order to perform the task by the Cites Authorities, the Court referred to clauses (f) & (g) of Article 1 namely; I. (f) 'Scientific Authority' means a National Scientific Authority designated in accordance with Article IX;

(g) 'Management Authority' means a National Management Authority designated in accordance with Article IX;"

The next article which is of relevance to this case is Article III(3) as it stipulates the role of Scientific as well as Management Authority. In order to understand the importance of these authorities, the court reproduced Article III (3) which is as follows :

"(3) The import of any specimen of species included in Appendix I shall require the prior grant and presentation of an import permit and either an export permit or a re-export certificate, etc. An import permit shall only be granted when the following conditions have been met—

(a) a Scientific Authority of the State of import

has advised that the import will be for purposes which are not detrimental to the survival of the species involved;

(b) a Scientific Authority of the State of import is satisfied that the proposed recipient of a living specimen is suitably equipped to house and care for it; and

(c) a Management Authority of the State of import is satisfied that the specimen is not to be used for primarily commercial purposes." Article IX stipulates functions of Management and Scientific Authorities. The High court while observing that the only function of the Management Authority was to ensure that "Specimen" is not to be used for commercial purpose. Error is committed by glossing over the function of the Scientific Authority. This resulted in passing the impugned directions which are clearly erroneous. The matter had to be placed before the Scientific Authority and it was the Authority which had to form an opinion as to whether the import will or will not be detrimental to the survival of the species involved.

It was held that the judgment of the High Court is not sustainable. The judgment of the High Court therefore was set aside. The order passed by the Cites on 17-01-2003 and the order dtd. 16-05-2002 as well as show cause notice dtd. 27-11-2002 by the Customs Authority were also set aside. Their Lordships were of the opinion that the appropriate course of action would be to permit Respondent to apply to the Scientific Authority for necessary permission. The application must be preferred within 4 weeks from the date of receipt of copy of the order. The Scientific Authority is directed to consider the application and pass speaking order after giving opportunity of being heard. The order of the Scientific Authority therefore should be passed within 3 months from the date of application made by the Respondent. In case the order is passed in favour of the Respondent he will be allowed to keep the trophy with him. In case the order is against the Respondent he shall surrender the trophy to the Customs Authorities. The order of the court however protects the rights of the Respondent as per law. The appeal was accordingly disposed on 26-03-2015.

K.B.R.

KERALA STATE

- 1. On 30th of May 2017 Kerala State became the first fully electrified State in the Country.**
- 2. Kerala State Electricity Board has given connections to all households except 1000 families including 150 families living in dense Forests.**
- 3. Kerala's Sri Padmanabha Swamy temple is considered as the richest temple of the world with more than one Lakh Crore rupees of worth treasures.**
- 4. Kerala is the leading rubber plantation state in India. It accounts to 92 percent of the country's total natural rubber production.**

OBITUARIES

Sri S.A.Reddy, 11.02.1923-18.09.2017



With deep sense of sorrow and profound grief, we record the death of Sri S.A. Reddy, Retired DFO, at Nellore on 18-09-2017, after suffering a massive heart attack. He was 94. He led healthy life in his retirement.

Sagubadi Adinarayana Reddy was born on 11-02-1923 in an affluent and noble agricultural family at Vayalpad in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. His father, the late Sri Venkata Reddy, worked with distinction as Excise Superintendent. S.A. Reddy had his school education at Vayalpad, did intermediate at Madanapalle and completed B.Sc degree from the Presidency College, Triplicane, Madras.

Sri Reddy was selected for Rangers training at the Indian Forest Rangers College at Dehradun. After passing out from the training college, he worked as Forest Ranger in the composite Madras State. Consequent on the formation of Andhra State he was promoted as ACF along with stalwarts viz. Sri Chinna Swamy, Sri T.C. Kesava Rao, Sri P.V. Ramana, etc. He prepared working plans for Kurnool East Division, Chittoor East and West Divisions.

He worked as DFO. Soil Conservation Division at Vizianagaram. He held charge of Nellore North Division, Kadapa North Division, Chittoor West Division, Flying Squad Division at Kurnool, Kurnool Division. For some time he worked as

special duty DFO at Adilabad and later was posted as DFO Coffee Projects in Visakhapatnam District. He was also principal of forestry school at Yellandu. He managed territorial divisions, prepared working plans, executed soil conservation works and imparted sound and good training at the forestry school. Undoubtedly he was a versatile and accomplished forester involving meticulous planning and efficient execution of works.

S.A. Reddy was married to Smt. Sundaramma in 1947 hailing from the famous Anam family of Nellore. She predeceased him in 2015. Sri Reddy was co-son-in-law of the late Sri B. Nagi Reddy of the famous Vijaya Vahini Studios, Madras. He was closely related to the late Dr. K. Kesava Reddy, retired Prl. CCF of Andhra Pradesh. Mrs& Mr. Reddy had 4 daughters viz. Aruna, Nirmala, Laxmi and Anitha. Nirmala passed away in 2012. Anitha at Nellore took care of Sri Reddy in his last days.

Sri S.A. Reddy retired from service at Anakapally, on 28.02-1978 after attaining the age of superannuation of 55 years. He was a well-disciplined officer, knowledgeable in all faculties of forestry and was very much liked by superiors and subordinates. He maintained good public relations wherever he worked. His death is mourned by not only his family but also many friends and relatives. We express our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

May God rest his noble soul in peace C.R.K. Reddy, Piler

SANJEEV KUMAR GUPTA**26.11.1970 – 07.11.2017**

We record the sad demise of a young Officer, Sri Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, CCF incharge of Adilabad circle at Adilabad, on the early morning of 07.11.2017 due to cardiac arrest. He was 47 years. He was rushed to the

hospital but it was too late. He was declared dead.

Sri Sanjeev Kumar Gupta is the son of Dr. Vinod Kumar Gupta, IAS (Rtd). Sri Sanjeev Kumar Gupta was born on 26.11.1970 in Uttar Pradesh. He did B.Tech (Civil Engg) at I.I.T. Bombay. He also did M.B.A.

Sri Sanjeev Kumar Gupta was recruited and appointed to Indian Forest Service in May 1994. He underwent training course at IGNFA from 16.09.1994 to 29.02.1996. Soon after he successfully completed the training course, he was attached to C.F. Visakhapatnam. He was Sub-DFO for about one year at Bellampally between 1997 and 1998. Thereafter he worked as DFO Kadapa, Kaghaznagar, Bhadrachalam South, Karimnagar East Divisions between 1998 and 2008. He was curator, IGZP, Visakhapatnam for about 3 years. He acquired P.G. Diploma in Wildlife Management from WLI Dehradun. In between he held deputation posts in APSHC Ltd. And APRMs Projects.

Sri Sanjeev Kumar Gupta was promoted to super time scale and was posted as CF, STC in November 2009 and worked as such for about one year. As CF he went on deputation for about 3½ years to Western Coal Fields at Nagpur. On bifurcation of the State of A.P., Sri Gupta was allotted to Telangana. He was promoted as CCF in 2014 and worked as CCF in the Office of the Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), as Field Director Kawal tiger Reserve and finally posted as CCF/CF Adilabad since 23.02.2017 till he breathed last.

Sri Sanjeev Kumar Gupta was married to Smt. Richa and they have two daughters. Older daughter is pursuing medical course and the younger one is in the school. Sri Sanjeev Kumar Gupta was proficient in many disciplines of forestry and he worked successfully in a variety of posts to the satisfaction of his superiors. He loved and encouraged hard working subordinates. He was amiable, social and sociable. He is survived by father, wife and two daughters. His untimely death is a great loss to the Telangana Forest Department in general and the family of survivors in particular. The Association of Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and A.P. convey their condolences to the bereaved family.

May his soul rest in peace K.B.R.



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