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FEBRUARY -2018

No.02



Chinkara
Gazella bennettii



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EDITORIAL

International Mother Language Day: - There are 195 countries in the world. This total comprises 193 countries that are member states of the United Nations and 2 countries that are non-member observer states. In these 195 countries currently 6909 languages are spoken out of which only 3,866 have a developed writing system. The remaining 3,233 are unwritten and only spoken. A language is a system of communication which consists of a set of sounds and written symbols which are used by the people for talking or writing. Mother tongue is defined as a language which a person has grown up speaking from early childhood or one's native language, or the first language that one learns mainly from his or her mother, when he is a baby, rather than a language learned at school or as an adult.

International Mother Language Day is a worldwide annual observance held throughout globe on 21 February to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and promote multilingualism around the world and to protect all mother languages. International Mother Language Day has been observed annually since 2000. It is observed on February 21 to recognize the 1952 Bangla Language Movement in Bangladesh. The fight for language diversity has a history, especially in countries such as Bangladesh. International Mother Language Day

is a public holiday in Bangladesh, where it is also known as *Shohid Dibosh*, or *Shaheed Day* (Martyrs day). The resolution to observe international mother language day was suggested by Rafiqul Islam, a Bengali living in Vancouver, Canada who spearheaded the campaign to get February 21 declared as International Mother Language Day by the United Nations. He wrote a letter to Kofi Annan who was Secretary-General of the United Nations, on 9 January 1998 asking him to take a step to saving the world's languages from extinction by declaring an International Mother Language Day. Rafiqul Islam proposed the date as 21 February to commemorate the 1952 killings in Dhaka during the Language Movement.

The *Shaheed Minar* of Bangladesh is a national monument in Dhaka, *Bangladesh*, established to commemorate those killed during the Bengali Language Movement demonstrations of 1952 in the then East Pakistan. On 21 and 22 February 1952, students from Dhaka University, Dhaka Medical College and political activists were killed. Replicas of the *Shaheed Minar* have also been constructed worldwide where people from Bangladesh have settled, particularly in London, Oldham in the United Kingdom and Tokyo, in Japan. An International Mother Language Day monument was also

erected at Ashfield Park in Sydney, Australia, on February 19, 2006 in memory of the martyrs Salam, Rafiq, Jabbar & Barkat who sacrificed their lives on February 21st 1952 at Dhaka, present Bangladesh to protect the Bangla (Bengali) language and has the slogan 'Conserve Your Mother Language' engraved on it.

Language is the most powerful instrument of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage. All moves to promote the dissemination of mother tongues will serve not only to encourage linguistic diversity and multilingual education but also to develop awareness of linguistic and cultural traditions throughout the world and to inspire solidarity based on understanding, tolerance and dialogue. More than 50 per cent of the approximately 7,000 languages spoken in the world are likely to die out within a few generations, and 96 per cent of these languages are spoken by a mere 4 per cent of the world's population. Only a few hundred languages have genuinely been given pride of place in education systems and the public domain, and less than a hundred are used in the digital world. Languages, with their complex implications for identity, communication, social integration, education and development, are of strategic importance for people. Yet, due to globalization processes, they are increasingly under threat, or disappearing altogether. When languages fade,

so does the world's rich cultural diversity. Opportunities, traditions, memory, unique modes of thinking and expression — valuable resources for ensuring a better future are also lost. To foster sustainable development, learners must have access to education in their mother tongue. It is through the mastery of the first language or mother tongue that the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy are acquired. Local languages, especially minority and indigenous, transmit cultures, values and traditional knowledge, thus playing an important role in promoting sustainable futures. The following are the ten most spoken language of the globe in order of number of people speaks. 1. Chinese, 2. Spanish, 3 English, 4. Hindi/Urdu, 5 Arabic, 6 Portuguese, 7 Bengali, 8 Russian, 9 Japanese, 10 Punjabi.

India has 22 official languages, which are listed in the Eighth Schedule of our constitution, out of which only 13 languages have a developed writing system, with Hindi/Urdu chief among them, spoken almost throughout India. These official languages are Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Maithili, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Santali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu. Hindi uses *devnagri* script while Urdu uses Persian notation. Telugu is the most widely spoken Dravidian language in India. Telugu is an official language in Andhra

Pradesh, Telangana and the union territory of Puducherry, making it one of the few languages (along with Hindi, Bengali, and Urdu) with official status in more than one state. According to Census of India, the total number of mother tongues spoken in India is 1652. However, only around 150 languages have a sizable speaking population. The official language varies from state to state. Although Hindi is considered the national language, not all people from all states speak Hindi. English is widely spoken, along with local state's language, and most schools in urban and rural India use English as the medium of instruction which is preferred by majority of people. I would say Indians are multi-lingual rather than bilingual. I myself know Urdu, Hindi, Telugu and English. I can read, write and speak fluently all these four languages.

Every year a theme is selected for observation of this day. 2018 theme is "Preserving linguistic diversity and promoting multilingualism to support the sustainable development goals". The theme for the year 2017 was Sustainable futures through multilingual education. On International Mother Language Day the UN's Educational,

Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN agencies and all others throughout the globe participate in events that promote linguistic and cultural diversity. They also encourage people to maintain their knowledge of their mother language while learning and using more than one language. The Linguapax Institute, in Barcelona, Spain, (Linguapax International is an NGO dedicated to the appreciation and protection of linguistic diversity worldwide) aims to preserve and promote linguistic diversity globally. The institute presents the Linguapax Prize on International Mother Language Day each year. The prize is for those who have made outstanding work in linguistic diversity or multilingual education. The International Linguapax Award was first given in 2002.

Vana Premi wishes that all the mother languages and other local languages of the globe to flourish, so that people can communicate not only with the people of their regions but also with the people of the globe freely and effectively to spread knowledge. **QMK**

Create your identity in such a way where people surely realize that ignoring or leaving you is only their loss. Leave with uniqueness and dignity.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I wish Vana Premi, all readers and your good self a Very Happy and Prosperous as well as Peaceful New Year. The front cover Jan.18 issue is Fantastic. Who clicked the camera? Astrologers and Economists have predicted that 2018 is very good for India.I am not sure that it will be same for Forestry.

Shri JV Sharma's Open Letter makes a sad reading to all sincere foresters. It's a warning to all others, particularly to our political masters. But then,situation for Indian forests is critical or is it?Let me refer to my own article published in the Indian Forester Magazine in 1985. (Vol.111,No.11November 1985, P.927 to 934) I had predicted that Indian forest will be no more than 10 % of the geographic lands. Hence i suggested to go for intensive Man Made Forestry Dr. J C .Nautiyal,IFS (-UP), retired as The Head Forestry,Brit Colombia Varsity, Canada, had prescribed that "when a natural resource is under stress, it is better to liquidate that asset and create new asset in favorable conditions." Time has come to think on those lines. Some inevitable facts in future are:-" the shifting aims and context of forest resources management are the functions of what people want from the forest.Therefore people provide the direction forests provide the means"(Pro. F.Duer etal,-1979)"mankind is neither unhurried nor predictable and if the forests are to serve him, its management has to move with the times" Warns Johnston(A.J., and et al, 1967.Both are renowned Professors of Forestry in the world.In my article I had stated that "Forests near the habitations will vanish inspite of protective measures because of the linkage between firewood and economic necessity of large number of landless laborers migrating to towns and cities""Man made forests will be located near enlightened population's centers". Gujrat is a good example.In Maharashtra eucalyptus growers Farmers' cop.movement is another example."Existing natural forests, will mostly have the role of protection of gene pools,of both flora and fauna. ... Such forests will be necessarily far situated, away from interference.These forest will also fulfill recreational and scenic demands."Foresters have to change their attitude, and adopt. Idealism may not be sufficient in future forest management. Discussion is called for at all levels in forest system.

I also congratulate Shri.P.K.Sharma for his timely and informative article on consolidation of forest lands, when faced with speedy survey of encroached forest lands, and FERA activity the GPS-GISmapping came to rescue.Very accurate maps were made in short time.

Thanks and regards.

Dr. A.R.Maslekar. 9422320548.

CHINKARA

Gazella bennettii

Indian gazelles, *Gazella bennettii*, are primarily found in the northwestern region of India in the state of Rajasthan. Their distribution extends from south of the Krishna River, as far east as central India, and into the north-central region of Iran (east of the Zagros Range and south of the Alborz). Sixty to 70 percent of the global population of Indian gazelles is presently found in western Rajasthan.

Morphology: - Indian gazelles are characterized by a sandy, yellowish and red colored fur with a pale white ventral region. Facial markings are well developed: they have a dark brown or black forehead and a light face with dark stripes and a noticeable nose spot. Fur color varies seasonally. In the winter, Indian gazelles are a dark grayish sandy color, and there is a distinct brown band edging the white ventral area of the torso. In the summer, the fur is a darker brown. Indian gazelles have straight horns with prominent rings and tips that are slightly out-turned. Horns are found on both males and females, although they are relatively shorter in females. Sub-adult males are hard to distinguish from females because of their intermediate horn length. Horns can reach lengths of 250 to 350 mm in adult males. Female horns are usually half the length of and thinner in width than male horns and have less prominent rings. Average male horn length of the subspecies *Gazella bennetti fuscifrons* and *G. b. shakari* is 256.6 mm. Females of these subspecies have an average horn length of 184.7 mm. Indian gazelles reach 0.9 to 1.2 m in length

and 0.6 to 0.8 m in height. Fully grown Indian gazelles weigh 20 to 25 kg. Females tend to weigh less than males and can be as much as 10 cm shorter in height.

Habitat and Ecology: - Inhabits arid areas, including sand deserts, flat plains and hills, dry scrub and light forest. They are facultative drinkers, and so can live in very arid areas. They sometimes raid fields cultivated with rapeseed and sorghum in desert regions (Habibi 2001b). Indian gazelles can thrive in a variety of habitats. They have been observed in dry deciduous forests, open woodlands, and dry areas such as sand dunes, semi-arid deserts, and arid valleys that have an annual rainfall of 150 to 750 mm. Indian gazelles are facultative drinkers and can withstand relatively long intervals between visits to water points by conserving metabolic water and taking advantage of water found in vegetation.

Indian gazelles are better adapted to browsing than grazing, but they can consume legumes and grasses in large quantities. Their diet typically consists of grasses, various leaves, crops and fruits such as pumpkins and melons. A majority of their metabolic water intake comes from the vegetation they consume. The brush and trees that make up their diet are found in mountain ranges and deciduous forests, while grasses and other herbaceous plants are found in valleys and agricultural fields.

The primary predators of Indian gazelles are golden jackals (*Canis aureus*), Bengal tigers

(*Panthera tigris tigris*), Indian wolves (*Canis lupus pallipes*), Indian leopards (*Panthera pardus fusca*), Asiatic cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*), crested hawk-eagles (*Nisaetus cirrhatus*), village or feral dogs (*Canis lupus*) and, most importantly, humans. Hunting and illegal poaching have greatly reduced population sizes of this species. Indian gazelles use their speed and stamina to evade predators and use their horns for defense.

Life Expectancy: Longevity of wild Indian gazelles is unknown. One individual lived to be 12.3 years of age in captivity.

Reproduction: Indian gazelles are polygamous. Males are extremely territorial and defend their resources with their horns. Male-male competition is frequently observed during the mating season, and males aggressively defend females from other males before mating. Mating begins as a male gazelle touches the underparts of a female gazelle with a stiff leg, called "laufsclag." When complete, copulation ensues. There are two breeding seasons throughout the year, one at the end of the monsoon season from late August through early October, and the second in late spring from March to the end of April. Indian gazelles have a gestation period of 5 to 5.5 months. Females generally give birth to one offspring, but twins have been frequently reported. A majority of births occur in April.

Female Indian gazelles provide direct care to offspring until they are weaned at about 2 months of age. Some offspring, however, may stay with their mother for up to 12 months when she has another offspring.

Gazella bennettii was considered a Schedule 1

species under the Wildlife (Protection) Act of India in 1972. Indian law fully protects Indian gazelles, reserving 80% of India as protected land, 5% of Pakistan and 9% of Iran. The Punjab Wildlife Act declared *Gazella bennettii* a protected species in the Cholistan Desert, which provides 26,000 km² of habitat for this species, and in the Punjab province.

There are over 25 protected areas within Rajasthan. However, the highest densities of Indian gazelles are found outside of these protected areas and parks, mainly within the Vishnoi communities. There are 6 major Indian gazelle conservation areas within the small district of Jodhpur, each with large populations. All protected areas have legal status as closed or non-shooting zones. The national parks of Bandhavgarh and Ranthambore are also protected. Populations of Indian gazelles have rebounded, mainly due to conservation efforts. Extensive research on Indian gazelles has been conducted by the Ecology and Rural Development Society. This society observes and monitors identified clusters of gazelles, studies population dynamics, creates networks of volunteers for anti-poaching activities, and hosts local level awareness workshops.

Population: - Numbers in India have been estimated at more than 100,000 with 80,000 in the Tahr Desert (Rahmani 2001). Numbers in Pakistan have declined due to overhunting, but no current estimate is available (Habibi 2001b). Current status in Afghanistan is unknown but they are also believed to be very rare (Habibi 2001a). Around 1300 were estimated for Iran (Hemami and Groves 2001).

SURVEY, DEMARCATION & CONSOLIDATION OF FOREST LANDS – THE A.P. EXPERIENCE-PART II

By

P.K. Sharma

DGPS Survey of Forest Block boundaries was initiated in the State of Andhra Pradesh in the year 2008-09 on pilot basis in Hyderabad Forest Division, in house, by the team of Geomatics Centre and staff of Hyderabad Forest Division. Approximately 60 Forest Block's boundaries were surveyed by using DGPS during 2008-09. As the work was found to be cumbersome and time consuming, it was decided to outsource this work, later on.

Accordingly, DGPS Survey of Forest Block boundaries was taken up under the CAMPA-NPV Scheme during 2010-11, on outsourcing basis, on a pilot basis in Karim Nagar (East) Forest Division. Later on it was extended to 5 more Divisions, viz., Hyderabad, Kurnool, Guntur, Mancherla & Bhadrachalam (North) Divisions.

After detailed deliberations in the **Technical Advisory Committee** meeting, consisting of experts from the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun; NRSC, Hyderabad; A PSRAC, Hyderabad; IIIT, Hyderabad; representative of Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF), Govt. Of India and the Geomatics team of APFD; methodology was finalized and Terms of Reference for DGPS survey by outsourcing agency prepared.

Consequent to the recommendations of the State Government's Committee on Land Reforms (Koneru Ranga Rao Committee), a detailed methodology for consolidation of Forest Boundaries, including relocation and re-fixation of missing boundary pillars with the help of DGPS survey was finalized and prescribed duly consulting the Revenue Department.

I. DGPS Survey in Karim Nagar East Forest Division:

This Division was situated in Eastern part of the Karim Nagar District. Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh States lie to the North of this Division. There were big and small 70 Forest Blocks admeasuring **1,56,321.21 Ha** of forest area. The combined perimeter of the Block Boundaries was 1357.63 Km. There were 11 Village Enclosures within the Forest Blocks. There were **5 Ranges, 23 Sections** and **78 Beats** in this Division.

The DGPS survey work, after finalization of tenders was entrusted to **M/s IL&FS**. The work commenced in March 2011 and was completed in March 2012. The total work was completed in a period of **12 months**. The DGPS Survey was conducted in Post-processing mode. The instruments

used were **Trimble R4 and Trimble R6 (Both are Dual frequency)**. Total cost incurred was ' **46.00 Lakhs**.

Major findings/ learning of the DGPS Survey are as follows:

Ø On the field only **30% boundary pillars were available**, prior to survey. Following the above methodology location of all the missing pillars could be established accurately and digital maps of all the blocks generated as per the orders of GOI and Supreme Court. This has been followed by re-fixation of boundary pillars without any dispute.

Ø As mentioned earlier, the **shapes of the DGPS surveyed digital maps** are bound to differ with the earlier conventionally surveyed maps. In this division 53 digital forest block maps tallied completely with those of the earlier Gazette notified maps, there were slight shifts in case of 6 Blocks and shapes of 4 Blocks did not tally at all. Gazettes in respect of 7 FBs were not available.

Ø Likewise there were **variations in the area** computed using DGPS survey with the earlier recorded areas, as follows:

Section & Act	No. of FBS	Area as per Gazette in Ha	Area as per DGPS Survey in Ha
(04) AP Forest Act ,1967	16	27302.61	28150.99
(15) AP Forest Act ,1967*	42	81927.37	75754.76
(19/15) AP Forest Act ,1967	1	2144.9	1986.06
(24) AP Forest Act ,1967	4	5925.37	6081.51
(19) Hyd Forest Act ,1967	1	934.60	1042.19
Un-notified	5	8685.81	8859.49
Azam Nagar Block**	1	Not Known	22888.41

*Part of Singaram Block in Warangal was not surveyed and its extent is 6000 Ha.

**Map is not available.

Ø **The degree of variation in the area** of DGPS surveyed maps to the notified forest block areas is as follows:

Variation in area	No. of Blocks
0-5%	39
5-10%	14
10-15%	10
15-20%	3
20-25%	2
>25%	2

II. Other Divisions:

Similar work has commenced in Kurnool, Guntur and Hyderabad forest Divisions. The Status is as follows:

Name of the Division	No. of Blocks	No. of Blocks surveyed	Outsourcing Agency
Kurnool	88	82	M/s. IL&FS
Guntur	113	96	M/s. IL&FS
NagarjunaSagar	24	09	M/s. IL&FS
Hyderabad	05	05	M/s. Aarvee Associates

It will not be out of place to mention that DGPS survey of **Forest areas diverted**, Compensatory Afforestation areas received, CA plantations raised and degraded forest areas treated in lieu of CA, was also been taken up. The work was being carried out by M/s. Geo Map.

In house DGPS survey of Forest Blocks in **Nizamabad Forest Division** was also taken up during 2013-14 in the wake of integration of Forest Blocks with Land Survey with ETS under the *Bhu-Bharati*, a Pilot Project of GOI in AP.

In this connection it will not be out of place to mention that the Areas computed with DGPS survey are not comparable with the **areas computed with Chain and Compass** surveys, because of:

- Difference in the Scales and accuracies in 2 methods. In C&C method one cannot measure beyond $\frac{1}{2}$ degree in a compass, whereas with DGPS 1/10000 of a degree could be measured accurately. Similar is the case with distances.
- Inaccuracies in conventional surveying & mapping instruments.
- Inaccuracies in conventional plotting (equipment paper v/s computer)
- Wrinkled conventional maps

Likewise DGPS surveyed maps are far more accurate when compared to SOI Topo Maps because of:-

- Old Surveys are by crude angle and distance measurements.
- Closing error always associated is manipulated.
- Plotting and Area calculation are by crude methods.
- Scales and accuracies are unsatisfactory
- Inaccuracies in transferring details of conventional maps on to SOI Topo-map.
- Digitizing from Topo-maps causes shifts and errors.

Conclusion & Recommendations:

As seen from the experience of Andhra Pradesh (including Telangana, of this date) it becomes

highly essential to bring the records of all the Land bearing Departments on the same platform. The outputs of two different methods never match within the same Department; therefore the same will be the fate of outputs of two separate Departments. Other than Forest Department Revenue Department is the other and major land bearing Department. The method of survey in Revenue Department has been Triangulation method using Chain only. It suffers from the demerits listed above with reference to Chain & Compass Survey of Forest Departments. Both these methods calculate the surface area. Hence the area is bound to differ (most likely on higher side) when compared to DGPS/ETS survey areas. And, this becomes the root cause of Forest Revenue Boundary disputes. Because of this reason only, there are number of Court cases involving Forest Lands. The Government of Telangana has started the programme of "Purification of Land Records". This will be incomplete, if all the Land Records are not brought on the same platform.

In order to resolve all such problems, including elimination of *Benami* & bogus land holders, once and for all, **all lands ought to be surveyed using DGPS/ETS, as DGPS/ETS survey is the most scientific method of surveys and outputs most accurate as on date.** Govt. of India should initiate this process and issue necessary guidelines to all the States and Union Territories in this regard.

In so far as Forest Departments are concerned, following need to be done:-

- The DGPS/ETS surveys must be followed by construction of all the missing **boundary pillars**.
- Wherever land value is very high and liable to be encroached, **Protection walls** must be constructed specially in the case of urban Forest Blocks.
- **Forest Block Boards (Signage)** must be fixed at all the vantage points.
- A separate **Forest Land Records Wing**, headed by an officer of the APCCF/CCF rank, in the PCCF's Office shall be created for dealing with DGPS / ETS survey and re-fixing of boundaries and digitization of all the existing land records and to deal with all Court cases pertaining to Forest Lands.

(The Author is former Prl. CCF & HoFF, Telangana. He may be contacted at +91 94408 10015 & pareshvyas22@gmail.com)

“Raising awareness on the most pressing environmental issues of our time is more important than ever” (Leonardo DiCaprio)

XVIII FRCS ALUMNI MEET-2018, NAGPUR TECHNICAL SESSION (6TH JANUARY 2018) INTRODUCTORY SPEECH

By
J. V. Sharma

Respected Chairman, Respected Chief Guest and Friends, Good Evening to you all, I am J. V. Sharma, an alumnus of Southern Forest Rangers College, Coimbatore of 1955-57 batch deputed by the then Princely State of Hyderabad. On return from SFRC, it was the reorganized new State of Andhra Pradesh in which I served and retired in 1990. I come from the City of pearls, Hyderabad. Given my indulgence to pursue environmental activism and advanced age of 85 years, I request you to kindly bear with me and the slur to some extent in my speech.

At the outset, my hearty compliments to the Maharashtra Chapter of SFRC Alumni for widening the family of the alumni from all the Rangers Colleges in India. To be honest, I too had my apprehensions on this expansion given the fear of losing the identity and ethos of individual colleges. Notwithstanding the past, it's the time to move on and start embracing our brethren from the other FRCs in this annual rendezvous. With the reform now introduced by Maharashtra, I am sure the tradition will last as long as the FRCs exists in India and their products are alive.

I must also thank the Organizers for sustaining the "Technical Session" an essential feature of the programme of the Meet. Having initiated this in the previous Meet at Hyderabad, I, personally have big stakes for having introduced it its Convener. The objective was simple. To start with we wanted token discussion at the Meets, and let there be other voices in support of forests from those who matter. This we can ensure only when we deliberate over the issues confronting the forests and express our views. I am grateful to Organizers for not disappointing me. I suggest this item of 'Technical Session' be assigned a slot in future Meets as well, may not at the very beginning of the Meet but at a time where the participants are in receptive mood free from fatigue.

My young friend, Suresh Deshpande rang up and asked me if I could speak before Mr. Nair delivered his lecture. I grabbed the offer with both hands lest my speech may not mean anything after the illustrious forester spoke. He is unable to make it to Nagpur because of his old mother's ill-health. We surely miss some valuable inputs from him about the general perception of various countries in respect of forests and the overall picture on global scale. I must however caution you in the beginning itself that the topics under discussion are neither juicy nor sensational.

Now coming to the substantive issue on the agenda, I have been asked to throw light on the following:

a) Impact of Implementation of Forest Rights Act on the forests of the Country,

- b) Position of Our Case now pending before the Supreme Court of India, and
- c) Other problems faced by the forests in India and issues connected therewith.

So, the mandate given to me is to cover the entire gamut of forestry in India which I am afraid is difficult to comply within the time available. However, I will try to go about the task as briefly as I can manage.

a) Impact of Implementation of Forest Rights Act on the forests of the Country

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA) has been under implementation for over 10 years now. In the absence of any cut-off date for receiving claims, the claims continue to be filed, albeit the number of beneficiaries staking claim had come down to a trickle. Since the topic under discussion is its implementation I am not inclined to catalogue all the infirmities of the legislation here as the same has been discussed quite often in the past at several Fora and quite an amount of literature has been churned out. Of the 29 States and 7 Union Territories in India, only 16 States are seriously implementing this legislation. Suffice it to say that majority of the States in India refrained from implementing the Act for one reason or the other. The Act is made not applicable in Jammu & Kashmir. The predominantly tribal North-East with the exception of Assam and Tripura and all UTs did not evince any interest indicating a fundamental conceptual error in the legislation. While Bihar, Goa and Uttarakhand marked token presence without active participation, Punjab, Haryana and Sikkim did not participate at all. The Act could not be implemented in Tamilnadu on account of a restrictive order from the Court.

I have prepared two statements, one (Statement A) showing the details of implementation in the sixteen States based on information accessed from Government portal as on 31st July 2017 (latest available) and the other (Statement B) depicting the actual impact of implementation on forests as analysed by me. I venture to supply briefly the vital information derived from both the statements in the following narrative:

1. In respect of quantum loss of forest area, total forest land alienated in the 16 States comes to 138.20 lakh acres (11.81% of the forest area) of which a maximum of 50.12 Lakh acres were alienated in Maharashtra (40.07%) followed by Chattisgarh-21.98 lakh acres (16.01%), MP-21.08 lakh acres (11.01%), Gujarat-12.88 lakh acres (35.57%), Telangana-7.54 lakh acres (14.13%), AP-6.43 lakh acres (10.66%), Tripura-4.35 lakh acres (22.58%). Forests constituted 18.87% of the geographical areas of the said States out of which 2.23% of the forests were lost under FRA.

2. A total of 41,33,879 claims were filed in the Country (States specified) which include 39,99,111 Individual claims and 1,34,768 Community claims. Of these, 17,37,346 Individual claims working out to 43.44% and 52,068 Community claims forming 38.64% were admitted. It otherwise means that more than 56% of the Individual claims and more than 61% of the Community claims filed were bogus.

3. Community claims and rights: Title Deeds have also been issued for an extent of 97,12,773 Ac in 13 States against 52,068 Community Claims. Average area so alienated per community varied from a minimum of 0.83 Ac in West Bengal to a maximum of 771.73 Ac in Maharashtra. Himachal Pradesh with 667.14 Ac, Telangana with 629.75 Ac, AP with 312.06 Ac and UP with 143.30 Ac are the other States which ceded forest land on high average. If gross area alienated by States on the account of community rights is to be reckoned, Maharashtra with 44,35,944 Ac stands first followed by Chhattisgarh (13,92,270Ac), Madhya Pradesh (13,02,302 Ac), Gujarat (11,61,350 Ac), Telangana (4,54,055 Ac), Andhra Pradesh (4,40,952 Ac) and Odisha (3,27,310 Ac). The State which conceded the least is Tripura (91.16 Ac).

4. Community Rights, as I feel, is an item which could have been kept out of legislation. Firstly, the areas sought to be vested as community rights are not under the occupation of the community and are different from those under individual enjoyment. The community does not as such derive any right over the said areas. Secondly, forest dependent communities have been availing their needs like MFP, fuelwood, small timber for agricultural implements etc. for generations, whether the rules permitted or not. Such benefits enjoyed by the community as a tradition could have been identified and their enjoyment regulated. An occasional enjoyment of a concession does entitle any to be treated as a right on the analogy of a user of a highway. To take the argument further, the entire society enjoys environmental benefits of forests and they are all stakeholders. It therefore logically boils down to the fact that the tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers who are the beneficiaries in the instant case cannot claim exclusive rights over the forest areas. In case the community is to be the exclusive right holder, can the community stop the fresh air going beyond the community or prevent forests under their control from acting as carbon sinks emanating from outside. Entrusting vast chunks of forests under the care and management of a community could cause immense damage to the very forests and prove to be counterproductive. To take lessons from history, decades ago, some close-by forest areas were entrusted to village panchayats in the then Madras Presidency and the policy had to be abandoned and the areas given were withdrawn. The areas handed over became totally degenerated to the extent even the grass refused to grow. We were shown one such area from Sadiwayal camp while in Forest College. Vesting of Community Rights will fragment the forests beyond recognition making management of the remaining forests that much more difficult. In fact, the States are already woefully short of one-third of area under tree growth and cannot afford to squander the existing forest areas. The bogey of community rights is the result of fertile imagination put in motion for populist reasons. A hard look at the JFM 4 and CFM of recent past should be enough to foresee the future of these areas. In short, Community Rights are a cruel joke played on the forests and the consequence is bound to be irreversible damage.

5. Though not said in so many words and not found in the Objectives and Reasons, the Govt. of the time strongly felt that the Left Wing Extremism gained foothold in tribal areas because tribal issues are not addressed to their satisfaction. They were of the view that the tribes and forest dwellers can be weaned away from the Maoists by conceding to their demands on land. In fact, the Govt. puts on a Statement on its website the Status of Implementation of FRA in the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) States. In all, ten States viz. AP, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, MP, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, UP and West Bengal, are named as LWE affected States. FRA has been very vigorously implemented in LWE States barring Bihar. 87.21% of the total claims received have been disposed of. It is close to 100% disposal in all the LWE States except Bihar. Ironically, the Naxalite menace appears to be the least only in Bihar where the FRA is not taken seriously. Going by the promptness in the process of verification of claims and their disposal, it is evident that the governments have not only taken it seriously but have even bent over backwards to please the tribal community. They have been extra-solicitous in alienating vast extents of forests as community rights. Cases in point are; Maharashtra-44.35 Lakh Ac, Chattisgarh-13.92 Lakh Ac, MP-13.02 lakh Ac, Telangana-4.54 lakh Ac, AP-4.40 lakh Ac and Odisha-3.27 lakh Ac. But all the efforts to wean the tribals away from Maoists appear to have become counterproductive in that the Naxalites continue to be active in the affected areas and they seem to claim that their presence alone forced the govt. to part with encroached forest land. Moot question is; did the FRA add muscle to LWE? One thing is apparent; the States have lost the valuable forest land.

6. Individual claims and rights: Title Deeds for an extent of 40,74,756 Acs., have been issued to 17,37,346 Individual Claimants vesting ownership rights on them over their (illegal) occupations in the forests on 'as is where is' basis. An Individual Claimant here means a nuclear family implying as many beneficiary households. The extent of forest land so alienated varied from a minimum of 0.47 Ac in West Bengal to a maximum of 5.39 Ac in Maharashtra. Other generous States are Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in the descending order. Allowing the individual claims on "as is where is" basis automatically results in honeycombing the forest areas which not only makes the management of forests difficult but also chokes the wildlife corridors. It causes immense harm to ecology as well as biodiversity not to speak of environment at large. Vesting of community rights will only compound the damage.

7. Eligibility of Tribal households: Though the total tribal households are 1,97,37,399, the landless tribal households constitute 35.65% with their number at 70,36,369. If it were to be a genuine and pragmatic measure to help the backward landless tribal population, the minimum they should have done is to undertake a detailed survey to prescribe eligibility criteria even from among the encroachers of forests and identify the needy through a 5 transparent process to exclude landed and non-forest dependent tribes. In the absence of any such provision, the entire tribal population

and OFDs become eligible and the filing of large number of bogus claims could be attributable to it. About 8.39% of total tribal households of the said States are benefited under FRA the maximum being 48.21% in Tripura followed by 21.38% in Chhattisgarh, 18.16% in Odisha, 18.09% in Kerala, 11.91% in AP, 11.12% in Telangana. It is significant to note that the CPM ruled States of Tripura and Kerala record higher percentage of admitted individual claims.

8. In the final analysis, the FRA is by far the most dreadful assault on the forests in history and its impact on forests is catastrophic.

b) Position of Our Case now pending before the Supreme Court of India

Soon after the UPA-1 came to power in 2004 with the support of the left parties, there was pressure from the CPM on the Government to take immediate steps to address the problems faced by tribal population. As a sequel, the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, 2005 was introduced in the Parliament. Encroachment of forest lands for agricultural purpose was already a menace and the Governments of the day were hesitant to take any proactive step to evict the encroachers. Nor did they allow the concerned forest departments to tackle the problem under the law in force, obviously for political reasons. National Forest Policy, 1988 and Forest Conservation Act 1980 were the stumbling blocks to divert any forest land for non-forest purposes. Despite the fact that the said legislation and the Forest Policy were brought in by earlier Congress Prime Ministers Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, Dr. Manmohan Singh's Government of UPA-1 did not have any qualms to dump their predecessors' policy on account of their new-found bonhomie with the CPM. The Bill went before the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) and the Group of Ministers (GoM) of the Cabinet. Irrespective of what the GoM thought or said, Dr. Singh had to comply with the demands of the CPM leaders. These developments appearing in the media were a cause of concern and our feeble protests went unheeded. The Forest Rights Act in the present form came into existence without much of debate in the Parliament.

We approached the High Court of Andhra Pradesh in 2007, even before the rules are framed, challenging the legislation and its provisions. I had also contacted the likeminded persons in the adjoining States and similar petitions came to be filed in the States of Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Orissa. Government of India approached the Supreme Court in Transfer Petitions (Civil) Nos. 414-417 of 2008 (Union of India Vs J. V. Sharma & others.) seeking transfer of petitions filed in various High Courts to Supreme Court to avoid inconsistent verdicts from different courts. The Apex Court in their Order dated 6th January 2015, transferred all the petitions pending before different High Courts to Supreme Court to be heard with petitions pending in the SC on the original side.

There is a restrictive order in force from Madras High Court against issue of titles in Tamilnadu. The order did not prohibit the implementation in toto but stipulated that the process of verification of titles could go on but titles can be issued only after obtaining permission from the High Court. My

younger colleague Mr. V. Sambasivam who is fighting the case in Tamilnadu is lucky that State Govt.'s request for permission to issue title deeds was not considered favorably by the High Court and the restrictive order is very much in operation in Tamilnadu. Not a single title was issued and not a single acre is lost in TN. I have not been that lucky in that though similarly placed with a restrictive order in my favor, the same was revoked by AP High Court conceding to a request from the State Government of AP. The composite State of AP lost close to 14 lakh acres in the process. My approaching the Supreme Court through SLP too did not yield favorable result.

A Special Bench of three judges has been constituted in the Supreme Court headed by Justice Chalameshwar and the Hon Bench decided to go first into constitutional validity of the legislation before taking up the pleadings against various provisions of the Act. Arguments against the legislation were said elaborately by Senior Counsel Mr. Shyam Diwan over several sessions and reply arguments were also adduced by the Government. The Bench is unable to sit again due to preoccupation with other pressing matters and we are eagerly waiting for the Day. I am only to report now that I have been following the case and in the process I happened to visit Chennai to brief the Counsel when Mr. Mr. Sambasivam was abroad. I also visited New Delhi twice to brief the Counsel engaged by my Tamilnadu friend Mr. Sambasivam and my Karnataka friend Mr. S. S. Joshy. Besides this, sizeable material has been prepared in support of our case and most of it is already in the public domain having been published in our Journal, Vana Premi or conveyed to the Counsel attending to the case. As for me, I am confident of positive outcome and wait for the Court verdict with my fingers crossed.

c) Other problems faced by the forests in India and issues connected therewith

Problems faced by forests are too many to enumerate. They appear to pile up with each passing day. It is precisely for this reason. I have been advocating serious debates over forest related issues, wherever and whenever possible, by all sections of the society and particularly the forest fraternity, both in-service and retired. While introducing the new tradition of 'Technical Session' at Hyderabad Meet, I made an entreaty calling upon the Alumni to actively deliberate over such problems so that it may add one more voice in defense of forests. I had also named some topics as examples, requesting the fraternity to discuss. But all the issues which we have been considering as problems all these years as plaguing the forests like protection, poaching, encroachments, management etc. are in fact to be rated only secondary because the primary concern, as it manifests with each passing day, is about the very existence of the forests which are under serious threat for one reason or the other.

To illustrate the malady the forests of the country are suffering with, I may cite the example of a State which is busy building its State capital. We have knowledge of new capitals coming into existence in the past like Chandigarh, Bhubaneshwar, Gandhinagar, Raipur etc., the foremost

however being the national capital New Delhi early in twentieth century. They were all examples where the available land resources were harnessed. In the present case 7 the capital region is sought to be spread over 8603.22 Sq. km and the objective is to have the world's best City in place. There is absolutely nothing wrong in going for such high bench marks and it is in fact laudable and should in fact be encouraged, provided however, it does upset the environmental equilibrium. Here the capital region is spread over areas of two revenue Districts which are already woefully deficient in tree cover. The State Govt. initially sought for more than 33,000 hectares of forest land out of the total forest area of 407.96 Sq.km existing within the APCRDA, which was later toned down to 12,000 hectares. One need wonder whether even the consultant city (here it is Singapore) enjoys the luxury of a shadow of its own prescription. Devious solutions to justify the diversion like keeping at least 50% of area under tree cover are said to be under consideration. It is anybody's guess whether such conditions will hold at all in practice and sustain on long term. Observers say that it is only a ruse to divert the forest lands and the forests are as good as lost forever once diverted and any conditions stipulated become meaningless.

I cite this example not to oppose the proposal but to bring in to focus the mindset of the ruling class in respect of environment in general and forests in particular. Glaring paradox is; a small patch of forest in Delhi (about 78 Sq.km) is considered too valuable to be diverted for non-forest purposes and it is being protected by a wall all round, obviously for environmental reasons but at the same time forests elsewhere are considered expendable. It is the same story in most of the diversion cases under FCA –be it mining, eco-tourism, industries or anything. Neither Central Govt. nor the statutory body FAC acquit themselves with glory. The mindset that forests are expendable is at the base of whole malady.

Forests and Forest Administration in India enjoyed certain degree of professional freedom in the past, for a few decades even after Independence. It had its own law, an administrative structure trained and geared to regulate the provisions ordained by the law with operational freedom with well-defined jurisdiction where it has territorial primacy. The foundations laid under the colonial rule established a tradition where the forester could play his role without interference and pressures, either from the political masters or the other sister departments. This tradition slowly yielded much of its space to political authority and to some extent even to District administration. It is an unfortunate development where the forester allowed himself to be dictated, almost surrendering even his professional identity. Going by prevailing administrative dynamics, it may to correct to say that the foresters themselves are to blame for the changed situation. I think they failed to distinguish between the service and professional rectitude.

No tears need be shed if a forester chooses to play a secondary role in administration but be if the surrender of his professional freedom hurts the forests irretrievably and he looks over his shoulders

for orders even in matters of professional expertise, it should certainly be a cause for concern. Vast chunks of forests are being lost at great speed on one pretext or the other. Reasons are too many. 43 lakh hectares of forest land was diverted by the States in first thirty years of the Republic from 1950 to 1980 at an average 1.43 lakh hectares per annum. It is believed that roughly half of these diversions were made for projects, industries, 8 mining and agriculture. Encroachments took heavy toll of forests accounting for the loss of about 70,000 hectares per annum. Enactment of Forest Conservation Act in 1980 arrested the momentum of forest loss to 40,000 hectares per annum between 1980 and 2004. But the period 2004 to 2014 proved disastrous for forests as the forest-loss more than doubled to 82,000 hectares per year in the decade. Despite such heavy diversions there is a sustained campaign by vested interests that FCA is the most serious impediment for developmental projects while the fact is that only 331 projects were rejected against 10,294 projects received during the period. That most of the projects obtained clearances and the rejections worked out to less than 0.032% and the rejected area accounted to a mere 2.5% of the area diverted should nail the lie effectively. Point to be made in this context is that there is professionalism deficit, besides other reasons, which made the large scale diversions possible.

Administrative realm in the country had undergone great change. Subjective considerations appear to influence the decisions a great deal. With a mindset which has no sympathy for forests and with professionalism rendered inconsequential, it is a case of lack of political will. What counts the most in a democracy is the political will. Lack of political will leads to policy paralysis and increased political interference where hard decisions to save the forests become difficult to come by. As a consequence, the forester gets rendered increasingly ineffective and therefore the need for reversal of the trend. It was in this context, I pleaded for a self-regulatory mechanism for the foresters and I commend the proposal for intensive debate.

As said already, problems faced by forests are many. I personally feel that they be identified and discussed in depth and it would be better if the ideas are flouted by members. The issues that need serious consideration are: a) To declare environment as top national priority next only to defense, b) To evolve self-regulatory mechanism for forest fraternity, c) To review the administrative and operational guidelines in the changed scenario of fragmentation and honeycombing of the forests – post FRA, d) To bring pressure on the Govt. to resume the encroached forest lands for which claims were rejected under FRA, e) To try for stringent criteria for diversion of forest lands under FCA, etc. to name some. I request the Organizers to pursue the matter for meaningful results.

THANK YOU

B. IMPACT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FRA AS ON 31.07.2017

(Area figures in Acres)

Sl No	State / UT	Total Extent of Forest Land given	Total Forest Area of State / UT	% of Forest given to Total Forest Area	TSA of the State (L/fig)	% of Forest in TSA	% of Forest lost to TSA	Total Population of the State	Total Households	% of Households protected forest land
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1	Andhra Pradesh	643372	803614	18.96	3888040	15.25	1.53	2521145	713812	11.94
2	Assam	NA	863218	0.00	7682844	56.22	NA	5884371	587325	6.46
3	Chhattisgarh	2128320	1573888	18.01	23421146	41.12	8.98	1522362	1141275	21.38
4	Goa	1288419	2633032	28.07	8643886	7.48	2.88	8217174	1827848	4.42
5	Himachal Pradesh	4573	3671528	0.13	12321365	26.40	0.03	355125	52217	0.26
6	Jharkhand	143358	5876148	2.45	18628126	20.45	0.73	5845342	1718359	3.17
7	Karnataka	42920	888883	0.48	4332414	18.98	0.88	4248887	928865	1.53
8	Kerala	33019	6764148	0.05	9803426	48.53	0.24	484838	138006	18.08
9	Madhya Pradesh	2183517	1974124	11.01	26710421	25.13	2.77	13215734	3213883	6.78
10	Maharashtra	5212973	1251886	48.07	26288960	19.45	8.58	10413213	2449245	4.57
11	Odisha	587838	1282888	7.28	26418126	32.98	2.44	9088735	2293142	18.16
12	Rajasthan	55614	3558115	1.35	64533379	4.73	0.37	9338524	1838144	1.97
13	Tamil Nadu	754147	508362	14.73	26384200	13.50	2.48	5288628	840723	11.12
14	Tripura	435817	1838128	23.98	2581126	74.49	16.42	1148813	258552	46.21
15	Uttar Pradesh	138837	2679437	2.91	89338300	6.92	0.24	1134373	812849	3.45
16	West Bengal	21285	678387	0.53	21621305	18.28	0.18	528853	1273423	2.69
	TOTAL	13828514	116742811	11.84	618771104	18.87	2.23	92388888	28888825	8.58

Birth Day 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		8.	Sanjay Gupta	05-03-1962
			9.	Smt.P.Shyamala	12-02-1980
1.	B.Chandramouli	08-02-1944	10.	P.Ramulu	14-02-1963
2.	P.Bhushanam	10-02-1947	11.	Ch.Suryanarayana	15-02-1966
3.	K.Rajasekhar	12-02-1936	12.	Ms.J.Vasantha	23-02-1980
4.	Mohd. Thayyab	16-02-1956	13.	V. Krishna	25-02-1966
5.	Sultan Mohiuddin	17-02-1942	14.	N.Kondala Rao	02-03-1961
6.	Sharda Prasad	20-02-1966	15.	V.Saibaba	04-03-1980
7.	A.Kishan	21-02-1952	16.	K.Vinod Kumar	05-03-1979
8.	A.V.Ramakrishna Rao	23-02-1935			
9.	P.Rajender Reddy	27-02-1956			
10.	L.Krishna Bhoopal Rao	03-02-1942			
11.	V.V.Rajam	03-02-1945			
12.	M. Anjaneyulu	01-03-1954			

Secretary

S.No.	Name of Serving Officers	D.O.B.
	Sarva Sri	
1.	A.K. Jain	05-02-1959
2.	P.K.Sarangi	06-02-1959
3.	VSNN Prasad	10-02-1979
4.	.Smt.R.Shobha	11-02-1962
5.	Chiranjeevi Chowdhary	16-02-1965
6.	Anil Kumar Mourya	21-02-1960
7.	Smt.A.Soni Bala Devi	01-03-1974



CAN A DIABETIC CONSUME DATES? YOU WILL LOVE THE ANSWER

Source internet

Dates are a great winter food that come loaded with nutrients like Iron and anti-oxidants. But, they are also higher in calories, as compared to other dried fruits, and one is usually not advised to consume too many in one go. Diabetics, more often than not, are advised to steer clear of these chewy delights. Is there any truth to this? According to Dr. Mukta Vasistha, H.O.D, Nutrition and Dietetics, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, all of you, yes, each one of you can eat Dates! Not one, but at least two to three, depending on how great your blood sugar level is. But what about Diabetics? The reason why Diabetics are asked to avoid high-sugar and high-calorie foods is because these may shoot up their blood sugar levels. Blood sugar levels are regulated, in the human body, by Insulin, a hormone that is produced poorly by Diabetics. In the absence of adequate amounts of Insulin, the glucose in the body is not used up and levels of the same shoot up in the bloodstream of Diabetics.

What are Dates? *Phoenix Dactyliferous*, commonly called date, comes from the family of flowering plants of the palm family. The fruit is grown on Date Palm trees in clusters under the palm tree's fronds. These trees are easily found in the Middle East where dates have been a staple for centuries. Dates are tricky to harvest and to ensure an abundant harvest, they are hand pollinated also.

Can Diabetics Eat Dates? Ask any Diabetic and you will find that dates figure on their 'Do Not Eat' list. That doesn't have to be the case. According to experts, diabetics can also benefit from the high fiber content of dates. It is okay to eat 2-3 dates a day for diabetics so long as they exercise caution and maintain healthy eating habits overall.

The nutrients present in dates are easily digestible: On an average, a diabetic is allowed to get up to ten percent of total calories in his/her diet from sugar on a regular basis. Having 3 dates and also consuming other sugary delights from the supermarket will definitely shoot up the blood sugar levels. If you are careful in your eating choices and your daily routine also includes a 30-min scheduled exercise/activity then a couple of dates when the craving for sugar comes up may not be bad after all.

Nutrient Content: The nutrients present in dates are easily digestible. Every date palm consists of dietary fiber, iron, potassium, vitamin B, B6, A and K, tannins, copper, magnesium, manganese, niacin, pantothenic acid, riboflavin. All of them help in improving your body's metabolism.

Dietary Fiber: It helps to reduce blood pressure and inflammation. Also, consumption of insoluble fiber helps to reduce the risk of type

2 diabetes.

Iron: Iron helps to produce healthy red blood cells which are responsible for carrying oxygen in your veins.

Potassium: Only diabetics suffering with some sort of kidney disease need to be careful while consuming potassium as high levels of it will result in the malfunctioning of their kidneys. As far as other diabetics are concerned, you don't have to worry about this.

Vitamin B1: When it comes to diabetics, thiamine, that is, Vitamin B1 protects you from nerve damage that you may face because of diabetes.

Vitamin B6: This vitamin helps you to have a healthy nerve system and is useful in treating diabetic neuropathy.

Vitamin A: Vitamin A helps you to retain your eyesight by fighting against diabetic retinopathy, a condition leading to loss of eyesight for the people suffering from diabetes.

Vitamin K: It activates proteins and calcium which helps in clotting of the blood.

Date fruit helps to reduce blood pressure in diabetics: Copper: It helps in reducing many biochemical problems like excessive tissue oxidation, and protein damaging glycations in people suffering from diabetes.

Magnesium: It helps in reducing your chances of getting Type 2 Diabetes because when a person is suffering from diabetes, he/she loses magnesium because of their elevated blood-sugar levels. **Manganese:** Manganese helps in regulating your body's blood-sugar levels.

Vitamin B5: Also, known as Pantothenic Acid, reduces the risk of neurological problems and a burning sensation in the feet, both of which are common in diabetic cases.

Vitamin B2: Riboflavin or Vitamin B2 is known to improve your body's metabolism and promote the overall health of the nervous system.

Dates are amazing as they are rich in fiber and so many other nutrients. Enjoy the benefits and eat a spoonful of chopped dates in your bowl of daliya, breakfast cereal or kheer this winter!

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"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world, It's the only thing that ever has"

(Margaret Mead)



**Alma mater of SFRC from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states
who attended 2018 Alumni meet at Nagpur**



**1.Facsimile of Trophies awarded to Sri J. V. Sharma IFS (Retd) from Telangana and
Dr. B. Raghotham Rao Desai IFS (Retd) From Karnataka.**



1. Sri J. V. Sharma IFS (Retd) From Telangana State receiving Citation from Sri Bhagwan, IFS, Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF) Maharashtra.



Dr. Raghotham Rao Desai IFS (Retd) from Karnataka receiving Citation from Sri Bhagwan, IFS, Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF) Maharashtra



Sri K. Buctchiram Reddy IFS (Retd) founder Editor is being felicitated



Sri Qamar Mohammad Khan Editor Vana Premi is being felicitated



ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ గ్రీన్ అవార్డులు-2017

ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ గౌరవ ముఖ్యమంత్రివర్గము ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ను హరితాంధ్రప్రదేశ్గా మార్చే సంకల్పానికి అనుగుణంగా ప్రజలలో పర్యావరణం పట్ల అవగాహన కల్పించడంతోబాటు పచ్చదనం పెంపొందించుటకు "ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ గ్రీన్ అవార్డులను" ప్రవేశ పెట్టడమైనది.

అర్హతలు : ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ రాష్ట్రంలో పచ్చదనం పెంపుకు సహకరించిన / సేవలందించిన అన్ని ఏజెన్సీలు, సంస్థలు, కార్యాలయాలు, గృహాలు, పరిశ్రమలు (ప్రైవేట్ మరియు పబ్లిక్) ఎన్.జి.ఓ.లు, వ్యక్తులు ఎవరైనా అర్హులు.

1వ విభాగం : స్థానిక సంస్థలలో గల మొత్తం పచ్చదనం

- మున్సిపల్ కార్పొరేషన్లు ■ మున్సిపాలిటీలు
- నగర పంచాయితీలు ■ గ్రామ పంచాయితీలు

2వ విభాగం : ప్రభుత్వ ఉద్యానవనాలు

- చిన్న ఉద్యానవనం (5 ఎకరాల లోపు)
- పెద్ద ఉద్యానవనం (5 ఎకరాలకు మించి)

3వ విభాగం : పరిశ్రమలు, కార్పొరేట్స్, సంస్థలు (పబ్లిక్ మరియు ప్రైవేట్ విడివిడిగా)

- చిన్న ప్రాంతాలు (5 ఎకరాల లోపు)
- మధ్యస్థ ప్రాంతాలు (5 నుండి 20 ఎకరాల వరకు)
- పెద్ద ప్రాంతాలు (20 ఎకరాలకు మించి)

4వ విభాగం : పాఠశాలలు, కళాశాలలు, విశ్వవిద్యాలయాలు మరియు ఆసుపత్రులు (పబ్లిక్ మరియు ప్రైవేట్ విడివిడిగా)

5వ విభాగం : పభుత్వ / ప్రైవేట్ కార్యాలయాల ప్రాంగణం

6వ విభాగం : గేటెడ్ కమ్యూనిటీ / అపార్టుమెంటు / ఇంటి ఉద్యానవనాలు, టెర్రెస్ గార్డెన్స్

7వ విభాగం : వ్యక్తులు / ఎన్.జి.ఓ.లు

8వ విభాగం : సంరక్షింపబడిన పురాతన (హిస్టోరిక్) చెట్టు / వృక్ష సముదాయాలు

ధరఖాస్తు సమర్పించే విధానం : "ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ గ్రీన్ అవార్డ్స్ 2017 యాఫ్" ను గూగుల్ ప్లే స్టోర్ లేదా ఐ.ఓ.ఎస్ యాప్ ద్వారా డౌన్లోడ్ చేసుకొని, ఆయా విభాగాలకు సంబంధించిన ఫోటోలు మరియు పూర్తి వివరాలతో ధరఖాస్తు చేయవలెను లేదా ఎ.పి.యు.జి & బి.సి వెబ్సైట్ : www.urbangreening.ap.gov.in నుంచి ధరఖాస్తులను సేకరించి ఈ-మెయిల్ : apurbangreening@gmail.com / పోస్టు ద్వారా కూడా పంపవచ్చును.

మరిన్ని వివరాలకు 7997650835 మొబైల్ నెంబర్ ను సంప్రదించగలరు.

పూర్తి చేసిన ధరఖాస్తులను ఏ.పి.యు.జి & బి.సి. వారికి చేరవలసిన తిథి 15 ఫిబ్రవరి, 2018

జారీ చేసినవారు: కమిషనర్, సమాచార - పౌర సంబంధాల శాఖ, ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ప్రభుత్వం

RANGER GANGAIAH ATTAINED MARTYRDOM, WHILE HIS KILLERS ARE SENT TO PRISON

By

K.B.R. Reddy

INTRODUCTION: R. Gangaiah, an officer belonging to the Dalit community, was the Range Officer of Kamareddy Range in the erstwhile district of Nizamabad in Kamareddy Forest Division during the year 2013. He was placed in full additional charge of Indalwai Range in the same division. In this Range, Nallavelli Extension Forest Block, a proposed reserved forest adjoining the Gowram reserved forest, was threatened with encroachment for cultivation at a place called Pedda Banda, in Sy. No 309 of Nallavelli village, compartment No. 426, by a group of villagers of Nallavelli village. The area was kept under surveillance by the Range Officer and his staff by frequent visits. The group of villagers had the patronage and encouragement by a few local unlawful elements and CPM party. Cases were registered against the encroachers by the forest staff whenever the offences were detected by them.

LARGE SCALE ENCROACHMENT: A large scale encroachment was planned by a huge number of men and women in an attempt to grab the forest land, preceded by a *Dharnain* front of the Range Office at Indalwai five days before the date of occurrence. They threw a challenge and shouted at the peak of their voice and said that, those who venture to prevent us from cultivating the land would risk their lives. After openly

declaring their intentions, they clandestinely started clearing the forest by engaging tractors at about 10.30 p.m on the fateful night of 14 September 2013.

INFORMATION ABOUT ENCROACHMENT:

Information about the large scale encroachment reached the Range Officer on the night of 14 September 2013 itself and he immediately asked a few protective staff members to gather at once at Indalwai Range Office. When the staff reported for duty, then they all set out to the scene of offence in the Government vehicle No. A.P. 25 AD 3025 and two motor cycles. Besides the driver F.B.Os Mohd. Maqbool, V. Bhoomaiah, Shabbir, Yadagiri, Ch. Mohan, Joseph, Surrender, Raju, and Seenu formed the Party headed by the Range Officer.

CRIMINAL ASSAULT ON FOREST STAFF: As the party reached the forest, they found that the encroachers in large number of about 30 men and women, engaged tractors in clearing the forest under the leadership of Vodde Bhaskar, Vodde Ramulu and many others. They alerted each other by blowing whistles, and shouted loudly to attack the forest party. They pelted stones on the jeep when it was stuck in the mud; as a result the wind screen was damaged. The assailants were armed with deadly weapons like *lathis*, sickles and axes. The women

sprinkled chilli powder on the FRO and others. Then they started beating the FRO with *lathis* and one man hit him on the head. He succumbed to the injuries. The other staff was mercilessly beaten with sticks, kicked and were rolled on the ground. They all managed to escape from the brutal attack of the assailants. All this happened during the night at about 11.45 p.m.

FIRST INFORMATION REPORT: FBO Mohammad Maqbool gave the First Information Report about the crime at Darpalli Police Station on the following day i.e. 15 September 2013 at about 04.30 a.m. The SHO registered crime No. 136 of 2013 and the investigation was commenced soon thereafter.

INVESTIGATION BY POLICE: The investigation into the alleged crime was conducted by a team of police officers viz. Sub-Inspectors Sri J. Naresh and Sri Ravi; Inspector Sri Srisailam; and SDPO (D.S.P.) Sri S. Anil Kumar under the overall supervision and guidance of the Superintendent of Police of Nizamabad district. A photographer under the instructions of police took pictures of dead body at the scene of offence, damaged jeep, tractors engaged by the accused. A *panchanama* of the scene of offence was drawn and an inquest was made by the police. Properties including Axe, Sickle, Chilli powder, blood stained clothes of the deceased, sticks, four tractors etc were seized. Extra judicial confessions of some of the accused were recorded under *panchanama*.

ACCUSED CHARGE-SHEETED: Charge-Sheet

was filed against 36 accused persons by the SDPO Nizamabad in the Sessions Court at Nizamabad. The case was taken up for trial in SC No. 45 of 2014 by the Special Sessions Judge for SC/ST (PoA) Cases-cum-VIII Additional Sessions Judge at Nizamabad, Sri Mohammad. Noorullah Ghouri, after commitment of the case by the II Addl. JMFC Nizamabad

The crime was registered against 37 persons, but by the time the investigation was completed, case against A-26 was abated and the trial proceeded against 36 persons viz. A-1 to A-25 and A-27 to A-37. The 36 accused persons were charged for the following offences:

- S. 148 IPC for rioting armed with a deadly weapon;
- S. 332 IPC for voluntarily causing hurt to deter public servant from his duty;
- S. 307 IPC for attempt to murder;
- S. 302 IPC for murder;
- S. 15 of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act;
- S. 3 of Prevention of Damage to the Public Property Act;
- Ss. 3 & 4 of AP Land Grabbing Act; and
- S. 3 (2) (v) of SCs/STs (PoA) Act.

PROSECUTION EVIDENCE: The prosecution examined 25 witnesses, marked 92 exhibits and 28 material objects. The most important witnesses were the FBOs Mohd. Maqbool (PW-1), Syed Moinuddin (PW-2), Chatapuram Mohan (PW-3), Kamashetty Yadagiri (PW-6), Syed Shabbir Ahmad (PW-7) and (Vorakunta

Bhumaiah (PW-8). They were the eye witnesses and victims of the criminal assault by the accused. FBO Mohammad. Maqbool played a pivotal role in the entire case. He lodged FIR in the Police Station and supported the case of the prosecution with perfection. In his evidence he gave all details of the ghastly crime and withstood well in the cross examination by the defense counsel. The evidence of the other forest witnesses was mostly corroborative and was the basis for the conviction of the accused numbering 14.

It was urged by the defense counsel that the evidence of the forest department employees, being interested witnesses, is not reliable. But the learned Judge over-ruled the objection and held as not sustainable in the light of the case-law of Orissa High Court in *Gangadhar Behra & Ors Vs. State of Orissa and Dalip Singh & Ors Vs. The State of Punjab* reported in AIR 1953 SC 364. The performance of FBO Mohd. Maqbool and the other FBOs and their evidence being 'consistent' and 'corroborative' is commendable. On the question of identifying each accused in an unlawful assembly, it was held that, "*when a mass attack is being made, identity of each accused may not be possible.*" The learned judge, while coming to the conclusion, followed the judgments: *State of U.P. Vs. Dan Singh & Ors*– 1997 (3) SCC 747. The modus operandi of assault on the Range Officer was described in the judgment as, "*A1 beat the deceased with an axe on his right side of the head. A2 beat with stick on his thigh and A15*

attacked with a sickle." According to the medical evidence, cause of death of Gangaiah is described as "*poly trauma with head injury due to intracranial hemorrhage*".

CONVICTION AND SENTENCE OF THE

ACCUSED: The learned Judge after going through the evidence held that A1, A2, A4, A5 etc. comprising 14 persons in pursuance of their common object attacked R. Gangaiah and caused injuries in order to do away his life and caused homicidal death and they are liable for punishment U/s 302 r/w S.149 IPC. This group of 14 accused persons is held guilty of all other offences, except the offence under S. 15 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. and are convicted and sentenced to undergo imprisonment ranging from one month to life and fine ranging from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 500/- each. The punishments are to run concurrently. The remaining 22 persons were held as not guilty and they were acquitted. Four tractors engaged by the accused are confiscated and the police are directed to take charge of the tractors.

The names of persons convicted and sentenced are as follows:

Wodde Bhaskar; 2.Wodde Ramulu; 3.Mandula Pedda Sailu; 4.Mandula Gopal; 5.Golla Muthaiah; 6.Gandala Laxman; 7.Nyamathabad Madanlal; 8.Bandari Venkati; 9.Makkala Chinna Venkati; 10.Ryapani Yellaiah; 11.Bandi Yadagiri; 12.Makkala Laxmi; 13.Pitla Ramesh; 14.Gollem Raju. Wodde Bhaskar, Wodde Ramulu, Mandula Pedda Sailu along with others are said to be the

notorious ring-leaders under the tutelage of (A18) CPM Party District Secretary who was also roped in but escaped punishment.

GOOD JOB OF INVESTIGATION/PROSECUTION

BY POLICE:The police team consisting of two sub-inspectors, one Inspector and a D.S.P under the overall supervision of the Superintendent of Police did a masterly job of investigating a difficult case which occurred almost during the midnight. The Additional Public Prosecutor, Nizamabad Sri Seshikaran Reddy conducted the prosecution, which was not an easy job.

THE JUDGMENT:The learned Judge analyzed the evidence and passed the judgment which runs into 60 pages. The judgment was pronounced on 25 September 2017. The learned Judge was magnanimous in informing the convicts of their right to appeal before the Hon'ble High Court against the conviction and sentence. The convicts were further informed that if they do not have means to engage an Advocate for preferring appeal against their conviction, an

Advocate will be appointed at the expense of the State if they prefer an application to the State Legal Authority at Hyderabad.

MARTYRDOM OF RANGER GANGAIAH:

New Forest Martyrs Day (Ban Shahid Divas) was commenced under the orders of the Government of India since 11 September 2013 and Ranger Gangaiah was axed to death on 14 September 2013. Month of September is said to be a *Sitamgar* – a Tyrant. It is truly so in the case of Gangaiah. In the death of FRO Gangaiah, the Forest Department lost a good worker and a duty conscious officer who attained martyrdom while his killers are sent to prison.

CONCLUSION:I am grateful to Sri Munindra, Addl.PCCF in the O/o the PCCF (Head of Forest Force) Telangana State. He was kind to get me a copy of the judgment from the Court of Special Judge for SCs/STs(PoA) Act cases-cum-VIII Additional District & Sessions Judge, Nizamabad through the local forest officers

JOKE OF THE MONTH

I am a Cardiac surgeon working in a reputed hospital in Bangalore....

Normally after I come out of the operation theatre after performing the procedure many anxious near and dear ones of the patient waiting outside eagerly, rush to me and ask me many questions about the condition of the patient, success of the surgery etc....

But recently I was asked a question by the patient's wife for which I had no answer... With both eyes filled with tears ,she held both my gloved hands firmly and asked "Please tell me doctor was there any other lady in his heart ?"

XVIII FRC ALUMNI MEET- NAGPUR

FROM: 06-01-2018 TO 08-01-2018

By
V.S.S. BABU

This year the XVIII Forest Rangers Colleges Alumni Meet was hosted by the Alumni of Maharashtra State at Nagpur. Hitherto the 17 Alumni Meets till the year 2016 were conducted as Southern Forest Rangers College Alumni Meets. This is the first time it was thought to involve the Alumni of all the Forest Rangers Colleges all over India and bring them to a common platform under one umbrella.

Till now the Alumni Meets were conducted at the following places hosted by different States in the years noted against each: 1). Nashik – Maharashtra-2000. 2) Bandipur-Karnataka-2002. 3). Hyderabad- Andhra Pradesh-2002 4). Coimbatore-Tamil Nadu–2003 5) Bhubaneswar –Orissa -2004 6) Mount Abu & Porbandar-Gujarath -2005 7) Aurangabad-Maharashtra-2006. 8) Ernakulum-Kerala- 2007.9) Indore – Madhya Pradesh – 2008. 10) Calangute-Goa- 2009. 11) Tirupati –Andhra Pradesh – 2010. 12) Mysore- Karnataka – 2011. 13) Madurai-Tamil Nadu–2012. 14) Bhopal- Madhya Pradesh – 2013. 15) Bhubaneswar – Odisha-2014. 16) Raipur – Chattisgad-2015. 17) Hyderabad – Telangana-2016.

The 18th Alumni Meet scheduled in 2017 could not be conducted during the year 2017 due to

some unavoidable circumstances and was held from 06-01-2018 to 08-01-2018 at Nagpur under the auspices of the Alumni of Maharashtra State as “Forest Rangers Colleges Alumni Meet” under the Chairmanship and Vice-Chairmanship of Mr. Rajendra Singh Bhangu and Mr. Naveen Agarwal respectively.

I and my wife Mrs. Bhagya Lakshmi started from Visakhapatnam by Visakhapatnam-New Delhi AP Express in the morning of 05-01-2018 and reached Nagpur by night 01-30 hrs. The accommodation for the delegates was arranged at MLA Hostel (Aamdaar Nivas) at Nagpur and when we reached there, Mr. Naveen Agarwal, my batch mate and the Vice-Chairman of the Organizing Committee welcomed us even at that late hour and saw that we settled down comfortably in our room.

Day-1: 06-01-2018:

After we had our breakfast in the morning, the delegates who had arrived by that time were taken on a city tour in Nagpur city by buses. We visited the following places:

1. Swamy Narayan Temple: This is the 750th Swaminarayan temple in India which was inaugurated in the city of Nagpur on Monday

7th October 2013. It is located in Wathoda near the Middle Ring Road. The temple is the largest among the over 1,000 temples that have been set up by Swaminarayan Sanstha across the world. Headed by the 93-year-old Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the fifth successor of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, the Sanstha was established in 1907 and has millions of followers around the world. Run by BAPS which stands for "*Bochanwasi Akshar Purushottam Sanstha*", 80% of the cost of constructing this massive structure has come from donations of local devotees. Designed on the style of Sompuri architecture which is about temple designs. The vast platform facing the façade of the temple adds to the temple's richness and glory. The fine arts of sculpture are aesthetically carved on every walls and pillars of the temple. More emphasis is laid on detailing while bringing out enriching designs. As one enters the temple, the eye catching set of stairs greet them at the entrance. In the premises of the temple is the soul soothing greens in the form of landscaped garden. The temple equally exudes the ancient charm along with the modern glory. It's a mesmerizing experience altogether.

2. Deeksha Bhoomi: '*Deeksha*' literally means act of ordaining and '*Bhoomi*' means the ground. '*Deekshabhoomi*' means the ground where people got ordained as Buddhists. '*Deekshabhoomi*' is a sacred monument of Buddhism located where the architect of the Indian Constitution, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, converted

to Buddhism with approximately 6,00,000 followers on '*Ashok Vijaya Dashami*' on 14 October 1956. Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism is deeply significant for millions of people in India. This religious mass conversion at one place was the first ever of its kind in history. *Deekshabhoomi* is one of two places considered to be of great importance in the life of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the other being *Chaitya Bhoomi* in Mumbai.

'*Deekshabhoomi*' in Nagpur, Maharashtra, is regarded as a pilgrimage center of Buddhism in India. Millions of pilgrims visit '*Deekshabhoomi*' every year especially on '*Dharma Chakra Pravartan Din*' ("Mass Conversion Ceremony Day") and 14 October, the Memorial Day when Dr. B.R. Ambedkar converted to Buddhism here. His final religious act was to embrace Buddhism. Today, the largest '*Stupa*' in Asia is erected in his memory at the site.

3. '0' Mile: Zero Mile Stone is a Great Trigonometrical Survey (GTS) Standard Benchmark built in 1907. It is a monument locating the geographical center of colonial India in the city of Nagpur, Maharashtra; The Zero Mile Stone was erected by the British to use this point to measure all the distances. The Zero Mile Stone consists of a pillar made up of sandstone representing the GTS Standard Benchmark, and four stucco horses that were added later. The height of the top of the pillar is

1020.171 feet above Mean Sea Level. It is located on the south east of Vidhan Bhavan, Nagpur. Nagpur is precisely at the geographical center-point of India and the zero mile marker is located here. The distances of various major cities which are measured from here are carved on the pillar erected at this zero mile site. Hence, Nagpur is called the zero mile center.

After visiting the above places, we returned to our place of halting i.e. the MLA Hostel. Had our lunch and had rest till the evening.

In the evening all of us assembled at Dr. Vasanth Rao Deshpande Hall located opposite to the MLA Hostel and the inaugural session of the meet was held there. It was informed by the organizers that a total of **181** delegates have attended the Alumni Meet out of which **55** were couples and **71** were single.

The proceedings of the meeting were compered by Mr. Javed Iqbal of 1966-68 batch. The chief guest of the function was Mr. C.S. Kripekar a veteran Forest Officer of Maharashtra who worked as Chief Conservator of Forests and also Director of Forest Research Institute and Colleges, Dehradun and aged about 91 years . The meeting was presided over by Mr. Sri Bhagwan, IFS, Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF) Maharashtra. Senior Members Mr. J. V. Sharma, Dr. B. Raghotham Rao Desai and K. B. R. Reddy and the delegates from various states viz. 1) Mr. E.Velappan - Kerala 2) Mr. E. Ramu-Tamil Nadu 3) Mr. M.V. Waddin- Karnataka 4) Mr. Lohit

Reddy-Telangana 5) Mr. T. Narayan Swamy-Telangana 6) Mr. K. Buchi Ram Redy-Telangana 7) Mr. R.A. Mazalkar- Goa 8) Mr. PG Borgaonkar-Madhya Pradesh 9) Mr. DP Deshmukh-Chattisgad 10) Mr. R.K. Sama-Gujrat 11) Mr. Varadhkar- Maharashtra along with Mr. Rajendra Singh Bhangu-Chairman and Mr. Naveen Agarwal-Vice-Chairman of the XVIII FRC Alumni Meet were requested to occupy their seats on the dais. The Meet was started by paying 'Homage' to the members of the Alumni who departed between the last meet and this meet by observing one minute silence.

The Organizers introduced the tradition to honor its members with Lifetime Awards for outstanding contribution/achievement. **Mr. J.V. Sharma** of Hyderabad belonging to 1955-57 batch of SFRC has been honored with the **Lifetime Award for his Outstanding Contribution to the cause of Forestry and Environment.** **Dr. B. Raghotham Rao Desai** of Bengaluru belonging to 1954-56 batch of SFRC has been honored with **Lifetime Award for Outstanding Achievement in the fields of Literature, Culture and Environment.** They were presented with a Memento and a Citation. **Mr. K. Buchi Ram Reddy** of Hyderabad belonging to 1954-56 batch of SFRC has been felicitated for successful founding of **Vana Premi**, the Journal of Association of Retired Forest Officers of Telangana & Andhra Pradesh and grooming it to become popular.

The following Members were felicitated in the meet by presenting them with a shawl and Bouquet:

1. Mr. Periya Swamy – of 1949-51 MFC Batch and aged about 96 years for being the oldest member of the Alumni who attended the meet.

2. Mr. Qamar Mohammad. Khan – Editor, “Vana Premi” the journal of the Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh States for carrying out successfully since last 10 years the publication of “Vana Premi” Magazine .

3. Mr. B.A.K Barelvi

4. Mr. V. Sambasivam

5. Mr. Suresh Deshpande

Mr. Naveen Agarwal Vice-Chairman of the Meet narrated the circumstances that lead to the holding of the Meet by the Alumni of Maharashtra State and explained about the importance and significance of Nagpur City.

Technical session was conducted by Mr. JV Sharma IFS (Retd) about the “Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act -2006 and the present stage of the case filed by him now pending in the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India and also the challenges before the forestry sector.

Mr. CS. Kripekhar the Chief Guest specifically said that after completing their training in the Forest College as ACF during 1950-52, the trainees met Mr. Chaturvedi, the then Inspector General of Forests who asked them as to whom do they

think the most important functionary in the Forest Department. All of them said different designations on the upper hierarchy. But Mr. Chaturvedi said “No. The most important functionary in the Forest Department is the ‘Range Forest Officer’ and he is the ‘back bone’ in the Department without whom the, Department cannot pull through”. Mr. Sri Bhagwan IFS; the Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), Maharashtra State, who presided over the function addressed the gathering and advised to convert the retired officers meet as a platform of inputs to the betterment of Forestry and lauded the interest shown by the members in participating in the meet in spite of their advanced ages.

The meeting was followed by Entertainment Programmes and got concluded. We have returned to the MLA Hostel and had our dinner and retired for the day. Some among us went to enjoy “Happy Hours”.

Day-2: 07-01-2018:

Today all of us assembled after breakfast and proceeded to visit the following places by buses:

1) Vinoba Aashram-Brahma Vidya Mandir- Paunar: Brahma Vidya Mandir, is located on the banks of the river Dham; 9kms. East of Wardha and 6 kms. Gandhij’s Sevagram Aashram. Vinoba Bhave first came to this location in 1938 and began initiating his various spiritual-social activities and experiments.

Quite unexpectedly in 1951, he was inspired to start the *Bhoodan Yatra* (Land gift Movement). For that he walked all over the country for 13 long years asking for land for the landless. His mission attracted many and thousands of selfless workers joined him in his efforts. Among these followers there were some women who wanted to lead a spiritual life. For them, Vinobaji founded Brahma VidyaMandir in 1959. The purpose of this place is to offer women the possibility of a deeply contemplative life overflowing in fruitful activities for the good of society. At this time Vinobaji was still on his *Bhoodan* walking pilgrimage; so for the first 5 years, he offered his guidance to inmates through correspondence. During his tour in Maharashtra in 1964, he stayed in this Paunar Aashram for about one year, modeling the inner and outer life he envisioned for the Aashram. Then again he moved to Bihar and returned to Wardha in 1970. From 1970 to 1982, the last twelve years of his life he spent in Brahma VidyaMandir.

2) Sevagramashram: *Sevagram* was Gandhiji's headquarters and place for experiments from April 1936. In the ashram the following are some of the structures in the ashram:

BAPU KUTI: This was the place of residence of Bapuji. From here he used to attend to the daily work of the ashram and giving interviews. In the adjoining room are his massage table and sleeping cot.

Gandhiji's Secretariat: Gandhiji kept in touch with the world through correspondence from this room. The Telephone brought here for the convenience of the British authorities for consultations with Gandhiji is displayed.

BA KUTI: This was the place of residence of Kasturba Gandhi. Some of the articles utilized by Kasturbaji are displayed here.

Bapu's Kitchen: This kitchen was used to cook food for the inmates of the Aashram and guests. It is still used as such.

The present status of the Aashram is that some young and a few experienced workers (Sadhakas) are living in the Aashram area and working under the inspiration of Mata Nirmala Gandhi.

Just opposite the *Sevagram Aashram* Lunch was arranged with traditional food items of Maharashtra prepared by using Organic items. (With the grains cultivated without using any chemical manures or pesticides). After having lunch we started our return journey and reached Nagpur by about 5.00 pm.

In the evening cultural programmes and games were organized. I and my wife Mrs. Bhagya Lakshmi conducted the games for ladies and distributed the prizes to the following successful participants:

Name of the Game	Prize	Name of the Winner
Passing of the Doll	1 st Prize	M r s . Anuradha Deshpande

2 nd Prize	Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas
3 rd Prize	Mrs. Pushpaveni Chandrasekhar
Picking the Lucky Dip	
1 st Prize	Mrs. Amaravathi Ramu
2 nd Prize	Mrs. Usha Shanmugam
3 rd Prize	Mrs. Pushpaveni Chandrasekhar

After some among us left to enjoy their "Happy Hours", a Housie game was conducted for the ladies and other remaining members and 3 Prizes were distributed to the participants who completed 3 Full Housies. All the above prizes for all the games were sponsored by us for distributing to the winners. Mrs. Shobha Agarwal W/o Mr. Naveen Agarwal assisted by Mrs. Sandhya Sadawarti and Mrs. Jyothi Karunakar and other lady members of Maharashtra presented "Shawls", as a token of remembrance of the Meet, to all the lady delegates on behalf of the Organizing Committee.

On conclusion of the games we had dinner and left to our rooms and retired for the day.

Day-3: 08-01-2018:

All the delegates assembled at the MLA Hostel after the breakfast and from there we were taken to the following places by buses:

1. Ram Temple at Ramtek: Ramtek has got Historic temple of lord Rama. It is believed that Ramtek was the place where Rama, the Hindu God, rested while he was in exile. Legend has it that the ashram of great Hindu sage Agastya was situated close to Ramtek. While the sages

performed religious rites, the demons used to disrupt their activities and slayed a great number of holy men. Lord Rama was distressed to hear about this, and took a vow to relieve the world from the demons. 'Tek' means vow in local language, hence the word Ramtek comes from 'Vow of Ram'. Thus it is believed locally that whoever takes a vow at Ramtek is blessed by the Gods for its fulfillment. The 'padukas' of Lord Ram are believed to have been worshipped here for centuries. The present temple is believed to have been built by the King of Nagpur, Raghuji Bhonsale, after his victory over fort of Deogarh in Chindwara. The present temple is said to be 400 years old.

Khindsi Lake: Khindsi Lake is a lake near the city of Ramtek. Boating, watersports, restaurant and resort is operated by Rajkamal Tourism and Olive Resorts at Khindsi lake. It is Central India's largest boating center and amusement park with many tourists visiting every year. All the delegates were taken to the lake side and made to enjoy the Boat ride in the lake. After finishing the Boat ride, lunch was arranged there in Shikara Hotel. After the lunch we started our return journey to Nagpur and arrived by about 3.00 pm.

In the evening the valedictory function was arranged in Dr. Vasanth Rao Deshpande Hall opposite to the MLA Hostel and all of us participated in the function. Mr. R.B. Joshi another veteran Forest Officer of Maharashtra

aged about 89 years belonging to 1954-56 Rangers batch and worked as Instructor in CFRC, Chandrapur, was the Chief guest and Mr. Umesh Kumar Agarwal IFS; Managing Director, Forest Development Corporation of Maharashtra presided over the function.

Mr. Sambasivam, Mr. Shivare, Mr. Viswakarma, Mr. T. Narayan Swamy Mr. Muni Shivanna, Mr. Sravan Kumar have spoken on the occasion and shared their experiences during the 3 days of the Meet. I have also spoken on the occasion and shared my experiences during our stay at Nagpur and I have suggested for altering the name "FRC Alumni Meet" as **"All India Forest Rangers Colleges Alumni Meet"** and my suggestion was very well received by the audience. Mr. Muni Shivanna from Karnataka State had announced that the next Alumni Meet would be hosted by the Alumni of Karnataka at Dharwad near Hubli. Mr. Periya Swamy, aged 96 years, the senior most member of the Alumni, remembered the absence of his batch mate late Mr. H. Rajagopal Shetty who worked as Instructor in SFRC and molded the career of thousands of Ranger Trainees and who was also attending the Alumni

Meets regularly and requested the delegates to observe a minute's silence in his memory. Accordingly the audience stood up as a mark of respect to late Mr. H. Rajagopal Shetty and paid homage to him. Vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. Javed Iqbal.

The meeting was followed by melodious songs "Sumadhura Gana" rendered by the Nakshatra Group of Nagpur which were very well enjoyed by all the delegates.

Then we returned to the MLA Hostel, the place of our stay and had our dinner and retired for the day by bidding good bye to all our friends and taking leave of them with heavy hearts. The passage of the time of 3 days of our stay was so quick that we were unable to believe that our stay at Nagpur had come to a close. The team comprising of the Chairman Mr. Rajendra Singh Bhangu and Vice-Chairman Mr. Naveen Agarwal and the members Mr. Dattatreya Sadawarti, Mr. Ramesh Kadu and Mr. Mangal Karunakar assisted by other members of the Organizing Committee, deserves the highest appreciation as they have taken all pains to see that each and every delegate was kept comfortable.

"Plans to protect air and water, wilderness and wildlife are in fact plans to protect man"
(Stewart Udall)

EK THA TIGER: UP POLICE BURIES ITS BRAVEST 4-LEGGED OFFICER WRAPPED IN NATIONAL FLAG

Source: Internet

Tiger was one of the best Uttar Pradesh police force ever had. Having cracked 150 cases single-handedly in his career spanning 14 years, he rose to the rank of deputy superintendent of police, the highest any police dog could have. A sniffer Labrador with 20 nails on his claws - a rarity according to his caretaker, he would just dash to the crime spot and dig out bodies or other crucial evidence in open fields, jungles or even water bodies. There was nothing he had not done.

So, when Tiger breathed his last on January 17, the police force decided to give him his due. Wrapped in the national flag, Tiger was buried with the traditional guard of honor as his colleagues as well as admirers paid their last tributes. The director general of police's office called up Muzaffarnagar SSP, enquired about Tiger's last rites and asked for his pictures to be sent to Lucknow.

"The guard of honor at Tiger's funeral was our way to show respect to the departed soul and recognize his contribution," UP DGP's public relations officer Rahul Srivastava told TOI.

His handler Satish Chandra said Tiger was brought from Hyderabad-based Canine Club of India (CCI), a government recognized agency that supplies pups to state police as well as paramilitary forces across the country. "He was 11-month-old when we received Tiger from CCI on June 26, 2003," Chandra said.

Before joining police force, Tiger had completed a 36-week rigorous training, which included tracking, explosive detection, narcotics detection, search and

rescue and guard training, at the Border Security Force's prestigious National Training Centre for Dogs in Madhya Pradesh's Tekanpur.

For over a decade police forces of at least two crime-prone districts - Shamli and Muzaffarnagar - completely depended on Tiger. Besides, his services were often requisitioned by forces of other districts too.

His colleagues cannot stop gushing about his various exploits.

In 2015, criminals had buried the body of a child in the depths of a mini-canal, which was impossible to trace. The crime scene was at least 500 meters from the spot where the body was buried. When the water flow was stopped, Tiger darted to the spot and unearthed the body.

In another blind case, unidentified men had killed a woman and dumped her body in a jungle in Jansath area of Muzaffarnagar. Tiger walked three kilometers inside the jungle and stopped at a spot. Phone surveillance later revealed criminals had used the same track and halted at the spot to make some calls. They were arrested.

Muzaffarnagar circle officer Manilal Patidar said, "Tiger's demise is an irreparable loss to us. He was a police officer like us. The department will never forget its brave soldier for his services to the nation."

According to his handler, Tiger lived for 14 years, two years longer than the normal span for Labradors. "He died peacefully," Chandra added.

SINGAMPATTY ZAMIN FORESTS – 40 YEARS OF LEGAL BATTLE – FINALLY DECLARED AS RESERVED FOREST

**By
M.R.R. Reddy**

Manjolai is a hill station in Ambasamudram taluk of Tirunelveli district. The hills contain evergreen forest through which tea plantations are seen. Bombay Burma Trading Corporation (BBTC) had cultivated tea in this area and maintaining them. Manjolai, Kakkachi, Nalumukku, Uthu and Kuthuraivetty are the five estates under BBTC management. The history starts almost one century ago.

Total area under forests under Singampatty is 23000 ha. Out of this, the erstwhile Singampatty Rajah leased out about, 8400 acres to BBTC for 99 years. (It is a separate episode why the area was leased out). The headquarters of BBTC is at Mumbai. This institution brought tea to Manjolai and cultivated tea here, after clearing pristine evergreen forest. The lease period expires in the year 2028. The estate management made several manipulations in the landscape during the lease period.

During the year 1952, the government acquired 23000 ha zamin forests under the Zamindari Abolition Act including the land leased out to BBTC. But the lease was not terminated and the institution was allowed to continue till the end of the lease period.

During the year 1977, the government decided to convert the area as reserved forest and Section 4 Notification was issued under the Tamil Nadu

Forest Act 1882. But the estate management objected to this and claimed Ryotwaripatta under Jenmam Abolition Act and had put lot of impediments through legal and other means. This stalled the process declaring this area as reserved forest. (Ryotwaripatta – the lessee can claim the leased land given for agricultural purposes if it is not classified as forest during the acquisition period).

During the year 1979, the then Forest Settlement Officer (Tahsildar, Ambasamudram), excluded the land leased out to the BBTC and ordered the proclamation declaring rest of the area as reserved forest. The Forest Department filed CMA No. 3/1980 in Tirunelveli District Court challenging the order of the FSO. The court after hearing quashed the order of FSO and directed the FSO to take up fresh enquiry and issue the orders accordingly.

The estate management filed a writ petition in the Madras High Court in the year 1981 and the High Court stayed the orders of the District Court. The stay was not vacated till the year 1999. During the year 1999, the stay was vacated and direction was given to FSO to complete the enquiry within 6 months and pass appropriate orders.

But the FSO had not passed any orders till the year 2009. The estate management influenced

in various ways and means and stalled the proceedings. The mighty institution closed all the paths.

In the year 2007, the then Field Director of KMTR, Thiru. A. Ramkumar, IFS and the Deputy Director Thiru. D. Venkatesh, IFS reopened the file and cleared the blockages one by one. In the year 2008, Thiru. C. Badrasamy joined with them as Deputy Director, Ambasamudram and all the three took lot of efforts by conducting several rounds of meetings with the FSO in this issue. But within these two years three Tahsildars (FSOs) were transferred. The third Tahsildar naming Mr. Sivasankaran drafted the final orders declaring the entire area as reserved forest. But before he issued the orders he was transferred suddenly. The next Tahsildar just kept the file and had not taken any initiative to issue orders in spite of the efforts made by the above three officers.

Meanwhile, the then Forest Secretary, Thiru Debendranath Sarangi, IAS came for an official visit to the neighboring Kanyakumari district. The above three officers went and met him there. They requested him to pay a visit to KMTR. After repeated persuasion, the Forest Secretary half-heartedly accepted their invitation and visited Sengaltheri forest guest house at Kalakad on 23.12.2009. After the dinner, Forest Secretary was appraised by D. Venkatesh and Badrasamy, the then Deputy Directors, through power point presentation. For this purpose a generator was carried to the up hills since there is no electricity in that rest house. The Forest Secretary clearly understood the issue and immediately contacted the District Collector, Tirunelveli to

follow up the issue and see that the orders are issued within 10 days.

These efforts yielded fruitful results. The FSO, on 06.01.2010, issued final orders notifying the entire Singampatty Zaminfirests into reserved forests under section 16 of the Tamil Nadu Forest Act 1882.

In order to prevent the BBTC getting a stay order for this notification, caveat petition was filed by the Deputy Director Thiru D. Venkatesh IFS in the District Court.

However the BBTC filed an appeal in CMA No. 4/2010 against the orders of the FSO in the District Court Tirunelveli.

The government was addressed by the forest department to appoint a special government pleader to this case considering sensitiveness of this case. Accordingly government ordered Government Pleader (Forests), Chennai to appear in this case.

Meanwhile all the three above officers were transferred out of KMTR as a routine.

In the year 2012 Dr. Kanjana IFS joined Ambasamudram as Deputy Director. She followed up the case. Government Pleader (Forests) Thiru. M.K. Subramaniam appeared for the case in the District Court at Tirunelveli. He requested the PCCF to depute Thiru. D. Venkatesh IFS to assist him whenever case comes up for hearing. Accordingly the PCCF issued orders to Thiru. Venkatesh to assist the G.P (Forest) during the hearing. Thiru D. Venkatesh and Dr. Kanjana rendered all the assistance to the GP during hearings. In the year 2015, Tirunelveli District Court dismissed the

appeal filed by BBTC.

Aggrieved by this order, BBTC filed a revision petition in the Madras High Court.

Meanwhile Dr. Kanjana IFS was transferred and ThiruJeyaraj IFS took charge of Ambasamudram division. ThiruSanthanaraman was appointed as Government Pleader (Forests). The present Field Director Thiru A. Venkatesh assisted the Government Pleader. After several rounds of arguments finally the High Court dismissed the revision petition of BBTC on 01.09.2017.

Immediately, ThiruJeyaraj, IFS filed a caveat petition in the Supreme Court to prevent BBTC from getting any stay order to the order to the High Court at Chennai. BBTC filed appeal in the Supreme Court at New Delhi.

Meanwhile the Field Director Thiru A. Venkatesh, IFS persuaded the issue to get government orders declaring the entire Singampatti forest area as reserved forest and to publish in the government gazette. Following this, on 12.01.2018 the Government of Tamil Nadu issued order declaring the entire 23000 ha area as reserved forest.

On 19.01.2018, the Supreme Court also dismissed the appeal petition filed by BBTC.

After 40 years of legal battle with a mighty company, the Forest Department finally won and 23000 ha of pristine forest added to the reserved forest. This could be achieved only by the tireless efforts of the above officers and the Government Pleaders. Thank God!

HEART TOUCHING PICTURE



**This picture broke my heart &
made me realize that we
should respect & appreciate
whatever we've got in our life**

NEWS AND NOTES

Winged guests find new wetlands, fewer

birds in Chilika: -Migratory birds are now attracted by other wetlands in Ganjam district and this could be the main reason for the drop in their number in the Chilika Lake this year, experts and officials said.

The bird census conducted by forest officials this month at all major water bodies of the district show that the Tampara Lake, the Baghua dam and other water bodies hosted many migratory birds, besides the Chilika.

"The waterfowl might have landed on the water bodies and other areas on their way to Chilika due to availability of food. It may be one of the reasons for fewer birds at the lake this year," said retired Chief Conservator of Forest and a noted ornithologist, Sudhakar Mohapatra.

The annual bird census, undertaken in the brackish water lagoon of Chilika on January 3, put the count at 8,93,390 birds, which is 53,000 less compared to last year's figure.

"We have spotted water fowls in 37 water bodies in our division this winter and the highest number of birds was spotted in the Tampara Lake," said Divisional Forest Officer (Berhampur), A K Behera.

Forest Range Officer (Buguda), P K Sahu said 458 birds were found in Bhagabanpur minor irrigation project (MIP) and 405 at Banapalli MIP, he said.

Population of TN elephants slumps 30% in 5 years: -Despite all efforts of Forest Department

and wildlife conservation organizations, the number of elephant in India drastically is reducing. After Assam, Tamil Nadu has also witnessed reduction in the jumbo-population. Although Tamil Nadu has the fourth highest number of elephants in the country, central government data suggests that the jumbo population in the state has plunged by more than 30% in the last five years. From 4,015 in 2012, the numbers have dropped to 2,761 this year, according to the Union environment ministry's reply in the *Lok Sabha* on Friday. In fact, Tamil Nadu witnessed the second steepest jumbo population decline in the country for the period.

Though government authorities attributed the decline to mass translocation of elephants to neighboring states due to drought, data ferreted out from the national wild elephant census 2017 suggests that Kerala too had witnessed a slump in population.

While Karnataka's jumbo population has stabilized over the years, Andhra Pradesh emerged as the only southern state to record an increase, according to the survey results shared by Mahesh Sharma, minister of state for environment, forest and climate change in the Lok Sabha.

'Census should be held twice a year in dry and wet seasons' Indian Institute of Science professor Raman Sukumar, who was part of the census coordination team, cautioned that the

figures were not conclusive. The census in Tamil Nadu was conducted during the dry season when elephants would have migrated to wetter areas, he said.

The census should be held twice a year both in dry and wet seasons to get the actual numbers, he added.

Soon after the census was over in several areas in the state, elephant sightings were reported, he said. The report did not include the number of elephants under indirect count during the census, without which it is incomplete, he said. The indirect count includes foot mark and dung count methods.

Moreover, the data has not been scientifically analyzed before it was released, Sukumar said, adding that a real picture of the elephant population in the state could be obtained only after completing these formalities.

New species of blind fish discovered in Meghalaya cave: A new species of blind fish has been discovered inside a cave in East Jaintia hills district of Meghalaya, a New Zealand-based science journal has revealed.

The fish – *Schisturalarketensis* – gets its name from Larket village, where the cave has been found, the journal, Zootaxa, said.

The species has apparently lost its sight living in perpetual darkness inside the cave, a joint team of scientists from the Guwahati University and the North Eastern Hill University said.

It has also lost its pigments while adapting to its habitat in the dark waters, they said.

KhlurMukhim, a leading researcher from Guwahati University, came across the blind fish in the cave several years ago during an expedition. The cave is about 880 meters above sea level and over 7 km in length.

Mukhim said that the study came out recently though it was found several years ago as he had to corroborate the available facts and figures to establish that the fish was actually blind and belonged to a new species.

What's in a school sandpit? In Australia, as many as 43 eggs assumed to be from one of the world's most poisonous snakes - the eastern brown - were recovered by wildlife rescuers. Students at a school on the New South Wales mid—north coast have learned a valuable lesson: sandpits make great snake nests.

Wildlife rescuers were shocked when a call to remove about a dozen eggs from a sandpit at a school near the coastal town of Laurieton, 350km north of Sydney, became rather more dramatic.

The eggs caused a stir when they were widely reported on Tuesday as belonging to one of Australia's deadliest reptiles, the eastern brown snake.

When volunteers from the Fawna wildlife rescue group inspected the sandpit they found it was home to many more than 12 eggs.

Rescuers Yvette Attleir and Rod Miller dug out the sandpit at St Joseph's Catholic primary school and discovered no fewer than seven snake nests hosting a total of 43 eggs, a new addition to the list of unsavory things found in a

children's sandpit.

They initially thought the eggs could belong to water dragons, but determined they were brown snake eggs.

"I believed they were brown snake eggs due to the fact that they were seen in the area and that when I shone a light through the egg I saw a small striped baby snake," Miller said.

But sceptics on social media questioning the shape and location of the eggs soon forced a clarification from the volunteer wildlife rescue group.

On Tuesday Fawna wrote on Facebook: "some experts far more experienced than our local handler have pointed out that the eggs can't be brown snake eggs.

"When we found the eggs we carefully checked the eggs over and found that they contained what appeared to be snake hatchlings. We were told was there were a couple of sightings of large brown snakes behind the area and all we could surmise is that they were brown snake eggs."

So what were they? Eastern brown snake? Water dragon? Bolivian tree lizard? Bryan Fry, who specializes in venomous animals and is an associate professor in the University of Queensland's school of biological sciences, confirmed at least part of the story.

"They're definitely snake eggs," he said in an email after inspecting photos. "But it's impossible to say which species until they hatch."

In any case, Attleir said the sandpit had recently been relaid, making it a perfect home for the

serpent.

"They obviously saw the sandpit and thought that will do nicely — the sand regulates the temperature perfectly for them," she said.

"Our area has a lot of wildlife and at the end of the day wildlife can impact on us. It's part of the beauty of living in this area." But the wildlife rescuers would not say what happened to the hatchlings, other than a cryptic "we're pro-life for animals".

One of the most venomous snakes in the world, brown snakes are highly adaptable and often find themselves in populated areas.

Increased sightings were reported across western Sydney in 2017, probably as a result of increased urban development.

Female eastern brown snakes do not guard their nest after eggs are laid and juvenile snakes are totally independent.

Brown snake hatchlings can vary widely in size, but begin to show characteristic signs of aggression soon after hatching. The eggs were due to hatch within weeks. Guardian

World to become drier with global warming of 2 degrees Celsius: study:

-But if we contain average warming to 1.5 C parts of southern Europe, southern Africa, central America, coastal Australia and Southeast Asia would avoid significant aridification, say scientists. More than a quarter of Earth's land surface will become "significantly" drier even if humanity manages to limit global warming to two degrees Celsius, the goal espoused in the Paris Agreement,

scientists said on Monday.

But if we contain average warming to 1.5 C (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit), this will be limited to about a tenth – sparing two-thirds of the land projected to parch under 2 C, they concluded in a study published in *Nature Climate Change*.

At 1.5 C, parts of southern Europe, southern Africa, Central America, coastal Australia and Southeast Asia – areas home to more than a fifth of humanity – “would avoid significant aridification” predicted under 2 C, said study co-author Su-Jong Jeong of the Southern University of Science and Technology in Shenzhen, China.

“Accomplishing 1.5 C would be a meaningful action for reducing the likelihood of aridification and related impacts,” he told AFP.

Jeong and a team used projections from several climate models, under different warming scenarios, to predict land drying patterns.

Aridification is a major threat, hastening land degradation and desertification, and the loss of plants and trees crucial for absorbing Earth-warming carbon dioxide.

It also boosts droughts and wildfires, and affects water quality for farming and drinking.

The team found that at 2 C, which could arrive any time between 2052 and 2070, between 24 percent and 32 percent of the total land surface will become drier.

This includes land in all five climate categories today – hyper-arid, arid, semi-arid, dry sub-humid, and humid.

But at 1.5 C – the lower, aspirational limit also

written into the climate-rescue Paris Agreement — this is reduced to between eight and 10 percent, said Jeong.

Under the pact, signed in the French capital in 2015, countries have filed pledges for reducing climate-altering greenhouse gas emissions from burning coal, oil and natural gas.

But these goals place the planet on track for warming of more than 3 C, which scientists warn will lead to life- and asset-threatening super storms, sea-level rise, floods and drought.

“Because present mitigation policies do not appear to be sufficient to achieve the 1.5 C temperature goal, more efforts to mitigate global warming are therefore urgently needed to reduce the spread of aridification,” the study authors said.

Endangered ‘bird language’ enters: - The whistle language used by villagers in remote northern Turkey entered the Unesco list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The unusual and very efficient whistle language used as a means of communication by villagers in remote northern Turkey entered the Unesco list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Unesco has accepted the “bird language” of Black Sea villagers as an endangered part of world heritage in need of urgent protection, Xinhua news agency reported on Sunday.

Around 10,000 people, mostly in the district of Canakci in Giresun province, still use the highly-developed and high pitch system of whistling to communicate in the rugged terrain where

most of the times they cannot see each other. This form of communication which dates to some 500 years ago, during the Ottoman Empire, was widespread across the Black Sea regions, but 50 years ago it suffered the impact of the progression of technology and nowadays the ever rapid growing of cellular mobile systems has put this cultural heritage under serious threat.

For centuries, the language has been passed on from grandparent to parent, from parent to child. Now, though, many of its most proficient speakers who use their tongue, teeth and fingers, are aging and becoming physically weak.

Young people are no longer interested in either learning the language, or in finding ways to update its vocabulary with new words, and in a few generations it may be gone for good.

"The mobile phones have had a certain impact on our whistle tradition here, but we are trying to keep our culture alive," said the Muhtar, the elected headman of Kuskoy (literally translated as "bird village").

This village of some 400 people where tea and hazelnuts are cultivated is located in the heart of the "whistle country" and more than 80 per cent of its inhabitants practice this incredible method of communication.

"We are very satisfied that our bird language is now a part of the world culture heritage, it was a dream come true because we think that it will also inspire others," said the Muhtar, adding that Kuskoy is making efforts to keep the practice

alive through its annual Bird Language Festival.

Albania losing its eagle: -

It is Albania's national symbol, but the eagle may soon only be found on the flag. The majestic bird is threatened with extinction due to widespread poaching of raptors.

On the side of a national motorway, just 30 kilometers north of the capital Tirana, a vendor offers motorists a common buzzard for an average price of 7,000-10,000 leks (55-85 euros, \$65-100).

The buzzard is a protected species just like the golden eagle.

But the man isn't concerned as he exhibits the bird with its wing wounded by a bullet and its talons tied.

"I didn't wound it. I was given it to sell. The buyers will keep it in a cage in a bar or a restaurant," he says.

Whether the customers want to stuff them or to keep them in captivity, they can find these birds for sale on the street.

Of the four species of vultures that used to exist in Albania, "only one, the Egyptian vulture, remains and its population has been extremely reduced," says MirjanTopi, author of Albania's first bird guide.

So too, the dwindling numbers of golden eagles, a two-headed specimen of which features on the flag of this mountainous Balkan country.

According to experts, some 25 years ago there were between 100 and 200 couples of golden eagles. That number today has been cut in half,

"a dramatic decline" says Topi.

On the road to extinction

For biologist Taulant Bino, president of the Albanian Ornithological Society, the golden eagle "is on the road to extinction".

"Fifty years ago or even in the early 1990s, we could see it on every summit," he says.

On a global scale, the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) is not classified as a threatened species, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

But in Albania nowadays the place where you are most likely to see a golden eagle is "stuffed in bars, restaurants or hotels," Topi says.

The idea is "to decorate the interior to attract customers, at the price of a sickening spectacle, in violation of the law, and in defiance of the state and institutions," the bird specialist laments.

Poisoned carcasses

There has been a hunting ban in Albania since 2014. Authorities say it has curtailed a large number of the 2,000-3,000 Italian hunters who are estimated to have killed more than 150,000 birds, including hundreds of raptors over the last decade.

But they admitted, when contacted by AFP, that the ban's effectiveness is limited as it only imposes fines.

According to Ermal Halimi, a specialist on the issue at the ministry of tourism and environment, there are plans to toughen the law, including "prison terms for all offences that contribute to the disappearance of protected animals." AFP

Protect both the environment and local

traditions : a northeastern Indian state has found a new way to protect both the environment and local traditions.

Sikkim's department of forests, environment and wildlife management encourages people to forge a personal relationship with trees. The department issued last year the Sikkim Forest Tree (Amity and Reverence) Rules 2017 that allows people to form three types of bonds with trees.

An individual can enter a Mitini (sibling) relationship with a tree. Those who want a paternal relationship can adopt a tree as a child. If they want to remember a deceased relative all they have to do is to register a Smriti (remembrance) tree.

To formalize the relationship, people will have to submit forms and appropriate documentation to forest authorities. The tree will be registered under the individual's name after due verification and scrutiny.

The trees registered may be part of the person's property or belong to someone else. If it is going to be in someone else's property, the person has to sign an agreement with the owner after paying some compensation.

In case of a tree growing in a public space, permissions will have to be sought from the concerned government department. Any damage to a registered Mith, adopted or Smriti tree will be treated as a forest offense.

The idea was presented by Pawan Kumar Chamling, often credited to be India's greenest chief minister, to Thomas Chandy, Sikkim's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests.

LEGAL NOTES

Public Prosecutor: High Court vs. Galeti Ramana & anr

A vehicle belonging to the respondent Ramana was involved in a forest offence. It was seized and produced before the Authorized Officer. The vehicle was confiscated. The owner of the vehicle filed an appeal before the District Judge, Ongole in A.S. No. 26 of 1989 on 01.09.1992. The District Judge allowed the appeal. Against the order of District Judge, the Public Prosecutor filed Crl.R.C. No. 696 of 1992 under Sec. 397 Cr.P.C. The Criminal Revision Petition came up for consideration before the Hon'ble Justice V. Rajagopala Reddy.

The Counsel for the Respondents argued that the Crl.R.C. is not maintainable under Sec. 397 Cr.P.C. since the impugned order was passed by the District Judge as a Civil Case and not by the District and Sessions Judge or a Sessions Court. The above appeal had been filed by the respondents under Sec. 44 (2-E) of the Andhra Pradesh Forest Act questioning the confiscation order of the Forest Officer. On a consideration of the facts recorded by the Forest Officer, learned District Judge allowed the appeal and set aside the order of confiscation in so far as it relates to the confiscation under Sec. 44 (2-E) of the Andhra

Pradesh Forest Act.

The question for determination by the High Court in this case was, whether an appeal against confiscation by a forest officer has to be dealt with as Civil Appeal by a Civil Court or as a Criminal Appeal by a Criminal Court. For this purpose, His Lordship followed a judgment of High Court in *Nehrulal Makhadia vs. State of Andhra Pradesh* reported in (1987) 2 ALT 171. The contention that when the subject matter is criminal in nature, it is the Sessions Judge and when it is civil in nature it is the District Judge, was not accepted. The case decided by the High Court arose under the A.P. Forest Act. It was held in that case that "District Court" means Principal Civil Court of Original Jurisdiction i.e., the District Judge's Court. It was held that the present revision petition is not maintainable and it is therefore dismissed. It is open to the petitioner to take appropriate proceedings before the appropriate court

Source: 1996 Cri.L.J. 1295

K.B.R

Note: In some states, the appellate court against confiscation is designated as Sessions Court.

***"Destroying rainforest for economic gains is like burning a Renaissance painting to cook a meal."
-(E. O. Wilson)***

OBITUARY

S. Rama Rao



01.08.1936 – 10.01.2018

Sri Sripada Rama Rao, Retired Chief Accounts Officer in the O/o the CCF AP, passed away on 10.01.2018 due to age related ailments at his residence in Vanasthalipuram, Hyderabad. He was 81.

Rama Rao was born in a poor family to Sri Narasimha Murthy and Smt. Parvathamma at Bobbili in Vijayanagaram district. He had his primary and higher education at Bobbili and passed B.A. He entered Government service in 1964 as a Range Clerk at Parvathipuram and worked under stalwarts like T.C. Kesava Rao. Rama Rao was later transferred to

Visakhapatnam, where by dint of his hard work promoted as UDC. He then came to the O/o the CCF at Hyderabad and became Office Superintendent. His work with devotion and commitment to duty was recognized and he was promoted as Accounts Officer and eventually retired as Chief Accounts Officer in 1992.

Sri Rama Rao was married to Smt. Lalitha in 1962 and the couple was blessed with two sons. After retirement, Rama Rao settled in Hyderabad. He was well disciplined and obedient to his superiors. He was friendly and cooperative with colleagues and respectful to superiors.

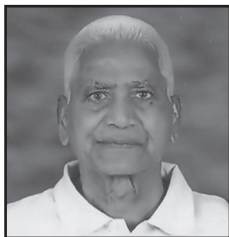
With colleagues and others he used to narrate his past experience of life in the ministerial service in Forest Department. He had sharp memory. His narration of events was interesting and rewarding to listeners. He lived well his past and enjoyed his present. For the future, he left for God's abode.

May his soul rest in peace! **B.S.N. Prasad**

“Sooner or later , we will have to recognise that the Earth has rights, too, to live without pollution. What mankind must know is that human beings cannot live without Mother Earth, but the planet can live without humans”. (Evo Morals)

OBITUARY

M. Narayan Rao



10.10.1932 – 19.01.2018

With profound grief we record the demise of one of our best friends Sri Maknoor Narayan Rao, popular as M.N. Rao, on 19th January 2018 at Saket Praman, Kapra, Secunderabad. He had a fall on 13th November 2017 in an apartment where he was living, and went into coma soon thereafter; he was not able to recover from the coma in spite of the best medical attention. He was 85.

Sri M.N. Rao was born in an agricultural family to Sri Narsing Rao and Smt. Kantamma at Ummeda village in Armoor taluk of Nizamabad district. He had his early education at Armoor and Nizamabad. He then moved to Hyderabad and did B.Sc. in 1953 from Osmania University.

He was selected by the Government of Hyderabad for appointment as Forest Ranger and was deputed to Southern Forest Rangers College (SFRC) at Coimbatore for training in forestry. He successfully completed the Rangers course during 1955 – 57. After passing out from the Forest College, Sri Rao worked as Forest Range Officer in Warangal, Karimnagar and

Hyderabad districts. He was promoted to the State Forest Service as Asstt. Conservator of Forests in 1971 and eventually as Deputy Conservator of Forests before retirement. He retired on superannuation in October 1990. As DFO, Sri Rao worked in Warangal, Adilabad, and Khammam districts.

Sri M.N. Rao was married to Smt. Lakshmi and they have one daughter Arundathi married into Puskoor family and three sons viz. Ramakrishna Rao, retired from private sector service; Vidyasagar Rao, retired from U.P. Forest Development Corporation and Vijay kumar Rao, working in Australia. All of them by God's grace are well settled.

Sri Rao was an ardent lover of nature and zealously participated in games and sports. He was social, friendly and enjoyed socializing with friends. Hard work, discipline and sincerity have been his goal of life. He was to be felicitated for having crossed 85 years of age, by the Association of Retired Forest Officers; but alas! he was in coma and now he is snatched away from us. Narayan Rao is survived by his wife, a daughter, three sons and eight grandchildren (three grandsons and five grand-daughters). He is fondly remembered by relatives, friends and colleagues.

May God bless his noble soul to rest in peace!

K.B.R



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