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Vol .19

MARCH -2018

No.03



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VANA PREMI

Vol : 19

March - 2018

No.03

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Date of Publication: 26-02-2018

Total pages 56

EDITORIAL

International Day of Forests or World

Forestry Day: International Day of Forests or World Forestry Day is observed worldwide every year on 21st of March in order to increase the public awareness among communities about the values, significance and contributions of the forests to balance the life cycle on the earth. Forests are very essential part of the life on earth. During celebration people share their views and ideas by working together to incorporate the forests into future climate change strategies, to make the people aware of the Forest activities, and they should get every idea to develop it in a proper way. It is very necessary for the common public to understand the forest's value in our daily lives as a raw material source, (e.g. paper, plywood, rubber, and many more) local employment source as well as the national income source. Forests play great role in gathering and releasing the water on the earth and maintain the flora and fauna habitat balance. Forests are the natural beauty on the earth which is very necessary to be conserved to go everything in balance. Forest is made up of lots of trees which are in a huge quantity and has much of the qualitative trees which enable the people to get every kind of requirements to be fulfilled by them. Forest is used to make the people get every Shelter for their Living. Forest gives shelter to those animals also which require

everything from forest like food, water and shelter to save their lives. When there is a loss of the Forests, there is a much of the loss of the Inhabitant animals species in the Forest. In short forest help us breathe, people live there, too, Forests keep us cool, Forests also keep Earth cool, Forests fight flooding and drought. Forests refill aquifers, Forests clean up dirty air, Forests muffle noise pollution, Forests provide, us food, and give us medicine. The ten countries which are the forest-rich, includes Canada, the Russian Federation, Brazil, the United States, Democratic Republic of Congo, Australia, Indonesia, China, Peru and India. There is almost 30 percent of the total land area of the globe which is occupied by the Forests.

Wood is a major renewable energy source - Wood provides the world with more energy than solar, hydroelectric or wind power, accounting for roughly 45 percent of current global renewable energy supply. Wood has been used by man as an energy source since the earliest times. The wood and charcoal that is supplied by the forests were once used extensively as fuel for cooking and heating have today largely been replaced by the more convenient energy sources of oil, gas and electricity. Wood energy powers economic development - Almost 900 million people, mostly in developing countries,

are engaged in the wood-energy sector on a part- or full-time basis. Wood and trees contribute to optimal urban living and lower energy bills - Strategically placed trees in urban areas can cool the air by 2 to 8 degrees C.

Readers know that all living organisms inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide, and without this, living organisms cannot survive. If there are no trees (forests) there will be no oxygen and no factory can produce Oxygen sufficient for survival of all the population of human beings and animals of the globe. Trees produce oxygen sufficient for all, that too free of cost. It is the trees (forest) that absorb carbon dioxide exhaled by us and release oxygen. Forests soils are mainly responsible for absorption of rain water during rainy season preventing flooding and releases water slowly during summer preventing droughts. They always fulfill the demands of the human beings by providing shadow, shelter, clean air and water. In the modern world, of growing population throughout the globe, increases the demands of forest produce and the forests are at big risks of deforestation and degradation. Forests are the complex living community of the trees which provides home and shelter to a big range of animals and human beings and the soil beneath it inhabit the variety of invertebrates, fungi and bacteria playing significant role in balancing the nutrients cycle in the soil and forest. Forests and trees support

sustainable agriculture. They stabilize soils and climate, regulate water flows, and provide a habitat for pollinators and the natural predators of agricultural pests. They also contribute to the food security for animals and of hundreds of millions of people, for whom they are important sources of food, energy and income.

According to the resources it has been noted that there is an annual loss of around 13 million hectares of the forests by the people. Loss of the forests enhances the loss of inhabitant animal species of the forest. Almost 30% of the total land worldwide is occupied by the forests containing over 60,000 tree species which are ultimately the great resources of the food, fuel, fodder, essential oils, resins, latex, gums, medicines, fiber, water, woods for the populations.

Every year a theme is selected for world Forestry day and theme for 2018 year is Forest and sustainable cities, let us make our cities greener, healthier, happier, place to live by increasing the forest area. 2017 Theme was Forests and energy. This global celebration of forests provides a platform to raise awareness of the importance of all types of woodlands and trees, and celebrate the ways in which they sustain and protect us. Deforestation accounts for 12 to 20 percent of the global greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming. Forests are used to develop the Infrastructure

of the People for their Welfare. Forests are used to grow that type of things which are required by the people for their needs. Every person should understand the value of the Forests in everyone's life and they should act according to the laws of the land. Every year we are losing large chunks of forests for various types of developments throughout the globe.

There is a good news for readers, and as per the State of Forest Report 2017, India's total forest cover has increased by 0.94 per cent from 7, 01,673 square kilometres to 7, 08,273 square kilometres since its last assessment in 2015, thus there is an increase of 8, 021 sq. km in the total

forest and tree cover of the country. "The total forest and tree cover with this increase is 24.39 per cent of the geographical area of the country." However, India has been trying to achieve to put 33 per cent of its geographical area under forest but has failed to do so. The most of the increase in the forest cover was observed in Very Dense Forest, followed by increase in open forest."

Vana Premi wishes that people throughout the globe realize the importance of the forests and everybody wholeheartedly save the forests for the happy and healthy world and for the survival of human beings, animals and plant lives. **QMK**

NOTICE

It is proposed to print telephone Directory of members of the Association of Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The Directory will also have Photos of all the members opposite their address and Telephone numbers. Hence all the members are requested to send their latest Passport size Photo after scanning on or before 31-03-2018 to the following e-mail I.D.qamar_asima@yahoo.com The photo can also be handed over to Mr. B.S.N. Prasad or Mr. Anwar in room number 514 Aranya Bhavan, Hyderabad. Please send your name, address and telephone number also. Printing work will start from 1-4-2018 and if photo is not received by 31-3-2018 the Directory will not have photo of such members. (Editor)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Without claiming any epistolary skills, I am addressing this letter. As usual, the latest issue of VP with its colour& pomp, had reached the readers in time, not disappointing with its contents ——— spearheaded by an informative editorial and coverage of last month's Nagpur-Meet, VSS Babu's meticulous report thereof being timely. Well done to publish J V Sharma's exhaustive written-speech which was lost in the din there ——— the assembly would have surely appreciated if it could hear it in full. P K Sharma's 'technical' article (in two parts) was good, while MRR Reddy's success story, in spite of surly attitude of BBTC (to restore sizeable chunk of Reserve Forest), and was enjoyable.

Sad to learn of M N Rao's demise (in such tragic background), who became a pally on joining SFRC a year after we were there ——— K B R had taken pains to collect required particulars to compile a befitting obituary. Pitching to Internet, and going for as many as 9 relevant News & Notes, interspersed with pithy quotations and humorous quotes, it should be admitted that you have obviously discharged the Editor's obligations quite competently. Congrats! With best wishes

Sincerely

Dr Raghotham Rao Desai

Dear Editor,

I must congratulate you for bringing out Vana Premi in the most beautiful form. Each issue has something unique in it and significantly qualitative about it. As usual, the editorial on 'international mother language day' is thoughtful. I am greatly impressed with the letter written by Dr. A.R/ Maslekar. Each letter that is addressed by him to the editor is full of wisdom and reflects his rich experience. He has been encouraging Vana Premi from its inception. We all owe a debt of gratitude to him for his blessings and encouragement.

You have chosen to publish a write-up on Chinkara. I think it is worthwhile to include one such article in every issue on any one of the wild animal or bird. The readers should be able to send a write-up narrating their experience on wildlife.

The articles by Sri P.K. Sharma published in the two issues of December 2017 and January 2018 on survey and consolidation are thought provoking and I feel all State Governments in the country should endeavor to implement the valuable suggestions to save the remaining forests.

The case of Singampatty Zamin Forests is a historic achievement of the Tamil Nadu Forest Department and all those who have striven for recovery of the precious forest deserve to be complimented.

The paper presented by Sri J.V. Sharma at the technical session of the Indian Forest Rangers Colleges Alumni meet at Nagpur is very painstakingly written with elaborate data on the impact of implementation of the Forest Rights Act. Sri V.S.S. Babu, has vividly described the XVIII Alumni Meet at Nagpur. Kudos to him

K.B.R. Reddy

Dear Sir,

Apropos to the Vana Premi, February, 2018; the speech of Sri J V Sharma, delivered and published as XVIII FRCs MEET-2018, NAGPUR TECHNICAL SESSION (6TH JANUARY,2018) INTRODUCTORY SPEECH" is like an epitome of the events of loss of forest areas in India after the enactment of FRA, 2006 in favour of the forest encroachers in the name of upliftment of the tribal and other forest dwellers. He has given a very good account of the callous respect given by the governments in the centre and the states for preservation of the existing forests, wildlife and the environment with warning about the impediments of global warning.

He richly deserves the "Life time Award for Outstanding Achievements in the Cause of Forestry and Environment" award given by the XIII FRCS, meet-2018, Nagpur in recognition of his untiring tirade against the loss of forest lands under FRA, 2006 through PIL by himself in the SC and his guidance to his tribe in other states.

Brief on the meet of FRCS at Nagpur by Sri V.S.S. Babu is worth reading.

The Editorial on the International Mother Language Day is very informative and enlightening.

Under News and Notes- It is interesting to note the news of slump in the population of elephants in the states of TN, Kerala and Assam in the last 5 years as per the news and the dispute about the figures by the Scientists. But, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, claims the increase in the population of elephants. There is spurt in incidences of man-elephant conflicts. As per a TV report on 21st Feb, 2018 the population of elephants in Bandipur Np, Karnataka alone stands at 1950 and tiger at 180.

If the elephant population of Bandipur stands at 1950; what is the fodder requirement per day? The average weight of the adults is 5000kg and sub-adults as half of the adult (adult 5000 Kgs.+ sub-adult 2500kgs/2=7500/2=3750 Kgs.) can be assumed as 3750 Kgs.

The adult, sub-adults and calves may be assumed as 1/3 each; take only adults and sub-adults for calculation of food requirement, it will be $1950 \times 2/3 = 1,300$ nos. with Average body weight of 3750 Kgs.

Elephants generally require 4% of their body weight of fodder per day as per a scientific study, i.e. $3750 \times 4/100 = 150$ Kgs. of fodder per day

The fodder requirement will work out to $1300 \text{ nos.} \times 150\text{kgs} = 195,000$ Kgs. or 195 tons of fodder per day in the lower assumptions and they may consume much more.

Reality in the ground condition of forest floor being occupied by Lantana, Eupatorium and Parthenium in Bandipur is suspected to be more than 50 % of its habitat of about 1000 sq.km. Can it provide 195 tons of fodder per day to elephants only...and what about the fodder requirement of other herbivores especially in summer. The elephants are bound to migrate in search of fodder when in stress and their population cannot remain constant/ rise in a given habitat.

B. M. T. Rajeev

CONSERVATION OF ALEXANDRINE PARAKEET IN ANDHRA PRADESH

By
A.V. Joseph

Recently a stock of Alexandrine parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*) were seized at Chennai and on enquiry Sri Niraj Kumar Shekhar, I.F.S CCF Tamil Nadu established that the Alexandrine parakeet chicks were smuggled from Andhra Pradesh. The officer had served in wildlife enforcement wing as well as TRAFFIC-India, and he must be correct in the conclusion.

Alexandrine parakeet chicks, a few days old with unopened eyes and naked (without feathers) were seized by Andhra Pradesh forest officers in good numbers from Narikuravas (a gypsy tribe from Tamil Nadu) while smuggling them in trains at Rajahmundry, Vijayawada and Sullurpet railway stations over a period of years. The number of chicks involved in each seizure was substantial and numbered from 150 to 250. They were hand reared carefully at Sri Venkateshwara Zoological Park, Tirupati and Indira Gandhi Zoological Park, Visakhapatnam and the excess adults were sent to other zoos in the country.

Three species of parrots are found in Andhra Pradesh, mainly rose ringed parakeet, blossom headed /plum headed parakeet and Alexandrine parakeet. The species is named after Alexander the Great, who is credited with the exporting of numerous specimens of this bird from Punjab

into various European and Mediterranean countries and regions, where they were considered prized possessions for the nobles, royalty and warlords. While the rose ringed and plum headed parakeet are noticed breeding locally, the Alexandrine parakeet was found roosting in large numbers in Kawal Wildlife Sanctuary, but no instances of existence of a breeding colony of birds in Andhra Pradesh has been reported.

After the seizure of Alexandrine parakeet chicks, a detailed enquiry was made of the source of origin of the chicks. In the investigation it was established that the main market destination as Chennai and it is clandestinely traded through internet and direct sales. Alexandrine parakeet is in great demand in the pet trade and is much sought after as they are very talkative and amass an impressive vocabulary. Sri P. Satyanarayana, DFO Wildlife Management Rajamundry, caught Narikuravas red handed transporting Alexandrine parakeet chicks and successfully prosecuted and got the offenders convicted. Initially the forest staff of Andhra Pradesh thought that the Alexandrine parakeet chicks were smuggled from Orissa state as reports of its breeding is there in Simlipal wildlife

sanctuary. However, on sustained enquiry Sri Vishwanadhuraju, the DFO Vijayanagaram reported that the chicks were brought from Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh. Srikakulam district has the least forest area in the state and apart from a natural patch of Sal forest at Donubhai, the main vegetation is coastal casuarina plantations raised by the department. Sri Vijayakumar DFO Srikakulam made a through enquiry and search and confirmed the existence of a breeding colony of Alexandrine parakeet in Palakonda and Pathapatnam ranges outside the forest areas in Palmyra trees in agricultural lands and in rain trees (*Samanea saman*) grown along the road sides. The day old Alexandrine Parakeet chicks were robbed from the nests by poachers and fed with boiled and mashed dal and sold to the Narikuravas from Tamil Nadu state that had their pickup points at Anakapalle and Anandapuram in Visakhapatnam district.

The wildlife wing of Andhra Pradesh thought of an innovative method of *in situ* conservation of these breeding colonies of Alexandrine parakeet. Sri Vijayakumar, DFO Srikakulam did a survey and located more than 400 number of nesting trees spread over in 21 patches and got them all GPS tagged. The nesting trees were mainly top broken Palmyra trees located in agricultural fields and rain tree planted in avenue. Since the trees are located in private

lands and outside forests, with no forest staff nearby to afford protection, it was decided to engage private watchers. The breeding season is from November to March and the DFO engaged eight Yerukula families, the scheduled tribe people mainly involved in the illicit trade of birds in the protection efforts by engaging them as protection watchers. Hired cycles were provided to the watchers for mobility purposes and progress was periodically monitored by camera photo pictures of nesting tree, the emergence of young ones and up to fledging stage. The fund requirements were met under CAMPA budget for meeting the expenses. To motivate and involve the local people in the conservation measures, the agriculturists in whose fields the birds were nesting and who actively participated in protecting the nesting birds were felicitated at mandal level functions and honoured. Low cost posters were printed and displayed in the two ranges, where Alexandrine parakeets were found to be breeding and people's cooperation was solicited for protecting the birds. The efforts made in the two years the DFO implemented the programme were very successful and the trafficking of Alexandrine parakeet chicks were completely stopped.

The conservation effort is now being improved and implemented by the DFO, Srikakulam under the guidance of CF, Visakhapatnam.

COULD I HAVE BEEN COMPARED TO A “LITTLE TORNADO” AS A CHILD? (AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ANECDOTE)

By

Dr. B. Raghotham Rao Desai

As an eight-year-old, I joined my maternal uncle, a renowned Advocate & Scholar, at Hanamkonda (Warangal), where I was admitted in 4th Standard in a Govt. School — it is a different story that I remained with him for the next nine years to complete my Intermediate, before shifting myself to Hyderabad for further studies, in 1952. It was the Nizam's Dominions at that point of time.

He recalled once when he happened to visit us at Gulbarga in early seventies two decades later (at the time when I was working as a sub-DFO), to the amusement of one & all what I was like when I was just three-year-old kid, as my parents happened to pay him a family visit earlier: 'Katrina', 'Fiona', 'Nargiss', 'La Nina', 'Doris'....and then 'me' the 'little tornado', that tore through their house turning it into a veritable battlefield! Nothing was allowed to remain in place anymore!! The desk and table-drawers were flung open and the contents **'examined with an investigator's details'** and strewn to the ground — papers, clips, tablets, et al. My eyes appeared to have gleamed with a **'discoverer's delight at unearthing the world's marvellous secrets'**. Then came the process of 'retrieval', when on bent-knees I seem to have tried to 'restore' everything to its place — but gave up the effort halfway as a 'waste of precious time' and **went away in search of 'greener pastures'**. I was perhaps rightly nick-named as "Lollappa", a

Telugu acronym for a brat!

Sofa-covers and cushions in the living room were made to 'come off with a flourish' and at that point of time the 'restoration work' was easier — by putting them back in a heap! The magazine-covers were ripped- off shelves in the walls ransacked, while the books at the centre of the table had a narrow escape!! Since I could not sit at the dining table, I had my food sitting on it, with the air of a prince! I seem to have eaten with particular relish whatever was sweet, while pushing away the spoon with total distaste whenever something was disliked. I seem to have eaten to the sound of music and whenever 'Itsy Bitsie Spider' came on, I would rock back -and-forth in sheer delight — so I was called the 'rock-star'. I would brook no opposition, it appeared, when my mother asked me to desist from crawling into corner, or under the table — crawling having been done, followed by the sitting- up with the triumph in my eyes. I was almost resembling the "Little Krishna" in appearance to all those who surrounded me, in my little bathtub, on the terrace, among the pitted seedlings and the plants that bent over with their benevolent grace. I was appearing to be happy to have a leaf or a flower (from the handsome Millingtonia (Indian cork tree), existing in the compound, floating in my bathwater. I loved to be carried from one end of the terrace to the

other, to be joined- in with the trilling birds around. Everybody wanted to have a turn with me, and I laughed & clapped my little hands when they played peek-a-boo. According to my enamoured uncle, (fondly called "Warangal-Mama"), **nothing could match the innocence of that laughter!** No wonder F. Thompson said: **"Look for me in the nurseries of Heaven".**

I would abandon my crib and sleep in the crook of my mother's arm and in that instant, everyone around could see the **age-old bond between a mother and a child.** When the time for my mother to leave for her place (in Mahbubnagar district) came, I seemed to have waved my Uncle & his family "bye-bye" obviously unaware of the "pain of farewells".——Who held the view that a day is not far- off when I will be able to turn the so-called drawbacks into strengths. An year later, my younger brother was born, and I got back the present name (as I was born on a day Saint Raghothama Teertha Punyathithi is observed since centuries at Thirukoilur in TN) the stop-gap name permanently, (given to me in memory of my mother's father, late Dewan Srinivas Rao Saraf, of Jatprol/Kollapur *Samasthan*) having then been assigned to my newly-born sibling. **It is perhaps true that every time a child is born, the world around is renewed in innocence.** Five years later, despite all that what I had done earlier, my Uncle must have read what my future would be if I was made to leave that non-descript village of mine, and so asked my father, himself an Advocate, to depute me to Warangal to grow and share (*Aadhyaatmic* and also Academic) under his guidance, while receiving my education (in Urdu medium) up to the level it existed then at his place, under Osmania University.

I firmly appear to have believed in the adage that **success doesn't depend upon "what we want": it depends upon "how badly we want", and persistently working towards possessing positive energies that one pines for and passionately dreams about. When one is stirred by a great resolve, the obstacles in the path become corner-stones of a meaningful journey —— the mind transcending limitations and consciousness expanding in every direction when one finds himself in a new, great and wonderful world.** The work we do then no longer happens to be a means and end but fruition, relaxation & salvation, all rolled into one—— it being no longer something that we do but rather something that we are: something that we have potential to become. **When we find meaning in what we do, the entire universe resolves the paradox.** Uncle also might have believed that **a word of encouragement during crisis is worth than an hour of praise after success. While self-motivation is certainly commendable,** the rest, as they say, is history. While I admired his epistolary skills (in addressing his friends, family-members & a legion of clients), one more thing I learnt at that early age (as a result of hearing any number of scholarly discussions and dispensations which used to be held on and off at our premises with Uncle chairing them mostly), was that **Hinduism is a religion without fundamentals : no founder or prophet ,no organized church, no compulsory beliefs or rites of worship , no uniform conception of the 'good life', and no single sacred book!**

IS KAWAL TIGER RESERVE A MISNOMER?

By
J. V. Sharma

Mr. S. Harpalsingh, who writes extensively about erstwhile Adilabad District and a scribe familiar to readers of Hyderabad Edition of *The Hindu*, filed a story in the Paper titled "Tipeshwar emerging a tiger haven" published on 19th February 2018 comparing the situation in Kawal Tiger Reserve (KTR) of Telangana and Tipeshwar Wildlife Sanctuary in adjoining Maharashtra State, very close to Adilabad Town. In the write-up, he referred to the observations of Mr. Mohan Guruswamy, a well-known writer himself to drive home his point. Whether it is by design or accident, a write-up by Mr. Guruswamy captioned "Tipeshwar tigers: Doomed by success" appeared in *The Deccan Chronicle* on the very next day i.e. 20th February 2018. While the topic articulated is the same, the contents are significantly important and need to be read together which will facilitate to gaining the right perspective of the issue under discussion. Both the writers deserve compliments.

Comparisons are not always fair. But they become indispensable to prove a point which is absolutely vital for the good and welfare of future generations. In a purely mundane and materialistic debate, questions like why should there be forests at all, why not divert all the land under forests, seemingly unproductive, be diverted for more visible and measurable purposes like farming, mining, industries etc more so in a populous country like India where the average landholding is not even an acre, will not the 20% of land in the country now under forests, if distributed to the landless, eradicate the poverty once for all, why should there be tigers at all and of what material use are they, are not the funds spent on forests and wildlife sector be better spent on other developmental works, are aesthetic and sentimental considerations the right basis for laying down the policies of governance, may crop up. They can as well be answered but it is difficult to convince the questioner for the simple reason that he does not have the receptive mindset to become wiser and knowledgeable for the simple reason he made up his mind already on issues and will not be inclined even to peep into areas beyond his nose. Deciding over issues after a thorough study of connected material and weighing the pros and cons is always better than knee-jerk reactions. These are forgettable characters and are better ignored.

I fully remember that even till not long ago, our leftist friends used to incite the poor landless population to forcibly occupy and cultivate the forest lands that do not support good tree growth. They used to call such lands as 'Banjar lands' meaning unproductive wastes. They started and spearheaded an agitation called "*Bhooporatam*" as recent as in 2007 and sizeable extent of forest land was deprived of its luxuriant standing growth. I mention this event here not as an academic exercise but as a hard proof of destroying the wildlife habitat not in any obscure region but in the heart of Kawal Tiger Reserve, the very issue under discussion. Photographs enclosed are self-explanatory. When there were no effective measures forthcoming from the State Government to deal with the 'encroachments', I went to the Conservator of Forests (Central) at Bangalore and lodged a complaint producing evidence in the form of CDs. He promised to visit the affected areas in the next 10 days and certainly before Dashera in 2007. The promised visit never materialised.

I cited this incident to point out that there is apathy all round and at almost all stages which matter for good governance. Our leftist friends may not now be as brazen as they were a decade ago. They appear to realise that their *Bhooporatam* philosophy may not cut ice with the present day informed intelligentsia. They had the taste of their 'land recipe' in West Bengal. It has been very bitter. They exercised unshakable power in West Bengal for 34 years, uninterrupted. Land reforms brought in by Jyothi Basu made the landless poor very happy and they became their solid vote bank. They thought they are invincible at hustings for generations to come. Suddenly their calculations went awry when they meekly surrendered the power to an untested political outfit called Trinamul Congress which had no record of governance. Thirty Four years of continuous reign should be good enough to implement viable developmental programmes to make the people happy or at least to infuse confidence. But they could not deliver the promised communist heaven. The reason for their failure was succinctly explained by Mr. Somnath Chatterjee, himself a veteran communist leader and a former Lok Sabha Speaker. According to him, land reforms brought in by Basu ensured a land holding to the landless. Initially, it provided a sense of identity as a farmer and people paid it back by voting the leftists to power again and again. While the continuous tenancy at the Writer's Building made the CPM complacent, the socio-economic dynamics in rural Bengal were changing fast. There is steady increase in population and the land holdings got fragmented among the new generations rendering them unviable. People who relied on farming for sustenance reverted to square one. Old loyalties evaporated and the people looked for better packages offered. There is a lesson in West Bengal example; land distribution is not a sustainable solution to eradicate poverty in a country with ever increasing population.

Unmindful of these developments, the nation lost sizeable forest land, close to 3%, under Forest Rights Act in the recent past. The loss is not merely in terms of figures. That to lose 3% of the already deficient 20%, by itself, makes an irreversible impact on the environment and the quality of life of the population is an undisputable fact. Adverse consequences have been colossal. The legislation provided for regularization of all encroachments in the forests as on 13th December 2005 by Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers to an extent of 4 hectares per nuclear family on as is where is basis. Besides, huge chunks of forest lands supporting vegetative growth have also been given away as community rights. The implementation resulted in severe fragmentation of forest blocks and their honeycombing which besides rendering forest management a farce, has also permitted deep inroads into otherwise compact forest blocks. It is pertinent mention that Telangana and Andhra Pradesh States have been extra solicitous by ceding more than its 10% of their forest land. Much needed privacy to wildlife is lost and their mobility as well as security got seriously compromised the escape routes and the traditional wildlife corridors being blocked and choked.

Evidently, Kawal Tiger Reserve cannot be seen differently from the general situation prevailing in the country and particularly in the State. To go by news reports mentioned above, the following is the position in respect of the two protected areas mentioned:

1. Kawal Tiger Reserve (KTR), specially chosen for the protection, preservation and improvement of tiger population, in existence for quite some time, does not have a single tiger rendering its very name a misnomer.
2. Tipeshwar Wildlife Sanctuary in Yeotmal District of Maharashtra, not very far from KTR, can boast of 12 to 14 tigers including 10 cubs.
3. In terms of extent as well as vegetation content, KTR is several notches high extending over 925 sq. km as against 143 sq.km of Tipeshwar Sanctuary. Indisputably, even now KTR can be called the pride of Telangana for its valuable tree growth and compactness but for the abuses heaped upon it.
4. The two tigers which were sighted last year in KTR were migrants from Tadoba and they too were poached, ensuring the dubious record of "NIL TIGER POPULATION".
5. Mr. Guruswamy opines that the nexus between politicians, timber smugglers and forest officials feel that the tigers are a nuisance. He does not have nice words even for State forest minister who hails from Adilabad and forest officials. Besides poaching of prey base, the

poachers wait for arrival of a tiger from outside with special interest. Naxalites too do not like tigers because their movements are caught on cameras meant for wildlife. Farmers electrify their fences to save crops from herbivorous wildlife and tigers end up as victims at times. He famously concludes his article with an observation "To survive, the Telangana tigers need friends in high places" which speaks volumes.

6. The articles strongly hint at management deficit for the poor state of affairs in respect of KTR and have good words for Tipeshwar sanctuary.

The two protected areas not far from each other and KTR should logically have an edge over Tipeshwar in every aspect of management. If it is not so, there should be some strong reasons for the prevailing situation. The fact that the two tigers that migrated to KTR are poached is a sad commentary on the protective measures put in place. Recent reorganization of Districts and of Forest Department appears to have worsened the situation. It is said that the Tiger Reserve area has now gone into the jurisdiction of all the four newly formed Districts and likewise into four Forest Divisions. It is also said that there is no regular FDO at Jannaram WL division since the last regular incumbent retired a year ago. Either the Division is in additional charge or the officers of short stay. Evidently place requires a person who is conversant with the nuances of wildlife management. The recent concept of all aspects of forest management, the territorial, wildlife and social forestry to be taken care by same staff may hurt the concept of specialization and professionalism and therefore may not be the right solution to the challenges on the field. General opinion of those who visited the protected areas in the State and outside is that there is much scope for improvement in the State and Tippihwar Sanctuary is a ready example.

Even the general protection of forests, not to speak of protected areas, is said to be far better in adjoining States and one can see the difference with a naked eye by just straying a few hundred yards into an adjacent forest area of other States across the State boundary from our State forests. It will be in public interest if the ruling political leadership and the Forest Department take initiative to find reasons and proactive solutions to reverse the unfortunate situation. J. K. Rowling's quotation "It is our choices that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities." can be a pointer in the context.

We always work for a better tomorrow but when tomorrow comes. Instead of enjoying, we again think of a better tomorrow. Let's have a better today.

ATTITUDINAL CHANGE IN FORESTRY SECTOR

By
Dr Akula Kishan

What is 'attitude'? 'Attitude' denotes a state of mind, mood, viewpoint, outlook, or belief. Attitudes are primarily shaped by information. A person then can have faulty attitudes based on misinformation. A healthy society, culture, and community should have a critical quality of providing a healthy diet of information to promote, support and sustain its growth and positive development.

An essential criterion for such information is the degree to which it reflects and imparts self-knowledge, critical analysis, problem-solving, vision and effective leadership. It is fair to say then that one of the ways to improve people's attitudes and better facilitate our adjustment to circumstances is to insure that our information meets the above criteria. Since information plays such an important role in the effectiveness of people, it is known to be used as a means of confusion, distortion, or obfuscation.

The existing pattern: -The Forest departmental staffs contribute very less input in policy making or preparation of schemes. The tendency to go by the dictates of superiors is predominant. The funds made available by the Government and external agencies are to be spent within a time frame is the goal of the staff.

Another aspect to be considered is enforcement of the law dealing with forests and wild life. Though very few provisions of the Forest Act and Wild life Act are to be used in dealing with the offences. It is unfortunate that many a time's confusion prevails in charging the offender. The procedural aspects are not well laid out and one has to learn over the years from personal experiences. Many prosecutions launched by the forest staff fail in trial stage due to deficiencies in filing and wrong charging of sections etc.

The delegation of powers in various aspects is insufficient, as is felt by the staff and the clear picture on the powers vested and powers needed is not spelt out.

The administration in the department is guided by the various Manuals or instructions issued by the Head of the department. The copies of these instructions and books are seldom found with the lower staff.

The activities to be done by the executive staff of the department have increased over the years but the corresponding logistical support has not been made.

The staff is working more for enforcement of forest laws, irrespective of the changed situation.

The action of the staff in performance of duties is prone to criticism most of the times, and a word or line in appreciation of the work done is seldom seen. Apart from the above the number of disciplinary cases and recoveries in forestry sector is quite alarming compared to other departments in Government.

In view of the above the mental condition of the staff can be well imagined. And the action or reaction of staff is mechanical and not performed whole heartedly. When the action is not from the soul it cannot give the expected result.

Efforts made:-The departments have publicized that the management of Forests will be jointly done by the Forest staff and the villagers who are near to the forests. The forests are designated for the Forest Protection Committees for management on sustainable basis. They are permitted to draw their own management plans which are to be implemented with the support or technical guidance of the forest staff.

The erstwhile smugglers have been asked to protect the forests by providing them some means of livelihood in forestry operations. The staffs, which were chasing the forest offender, have to sit with the same person and discuss the plan of operations to be carried out in forest area. Number of workshops and seminars were conducted at various levels to explain the changed situation.

Management of Change:-The work done so far

have made the villagers to think of their posterity, and plan for the future. But the concept could not be understood. The villagers are of the view that the forest staffs was giving instructions unilaterally in earlier occasions and now they are discussing with them on execution of works. In both situations the work was done by the villager for the payment of wages. It is true that one can think of the society and others once his daily needs of food, clothing and shelter (*Roti, Kapda, aur Makan*) are met. As long as the basic needs are not provided for, the voluntary efforts of the villager cannot be expected.

Apart from the above the publicity on the new role of the staff and the villager is woefully lacking. The publicity material meant for the lower staff and villagers never reaches them and as a result the target group is suffering due to distortions in communication.

Though the joint efforts in management of forests are laudable, there should be clear demarcation of 'duties and responsibilities' of villagers and staff.

The villager's role should be statutorily determined so that the resource of forest can be protected without any influence of local conditions and bias.

Similar is the situation with the staff. They are given the dual role of policeman and benefactor, and the fine differentiation in both

the roles is very difficult to grasp by the lower staff who are hitherto implementing the instructions and doing more of enforcement work than the community development.

The staff should be given more exposure to the changed scenarios by providing them with sufficient printed material, to serve as reference material, and more of audio-visual aides. The media should be fully utilized as was done in the campaign of 'family planning', as the visuals make great impact on the attitudes. As all the staff cannot be taken on tour to different places, it is desirable that they should show documentaries and films explaining the theme of conservation of forests and participation of people in protecting the common property resource.

Changed scenario: - The implementation of principle of joint forest management is being done for over a decade now, and the existence of another mode of management is felt. The success rate of the JFM varies depending on the concerted efforts made by the individual staff member and the inclination of the concerned villagers. The importance of conservation of forests is being driven home by the judiciary also as the Apex Courts and other Courts are sternly dealing with offences involving forest conservation.

Future course of action: - 1. The subordinate staff should be given more exposure to the changes in management by providing them more information and material. And their voices should be heard rather than ignored.

NOTICE

The 87th General Body Meeting of the Association of Retired Forest Officers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will be held on 11th March 2018 at 11 A.M. in Aranya Bhavan, Hyderabad. All the members of the Association are requested to make it convenient to attend the meeting with Spouses

(General Secretary)

Life is nothing when we get everything. But life is everything when we miss something. Value of people is realized in their absence only. (A.P.J. Abdul Kalam)

FOREST LAW IN FORESTRY

By
K.B.R. Reddy

We have gained adequate knowledge of various disciplines in the science of forestry during our training in the forest colleges. Forest Law is one in which we had a few lectures. Once we passed out to hold field posts, we were exposed to different situations.

Forest Protection against biotic interference is a major problem. Petty cases are compounded. Problem becomes difficult when we have to deal with grave cases involving influential and resourceful persons. In such cases, documents are carefully prepared well before the complaints are laid before the courts. We may have to find an incorruptible and honest prosecutor. It is the duty of the forest officer to prepare the records and hand them over to the prosecutor to proceed further. The prosecutor needs instructions from time to time, during the progress of the prosecution.

If it is a simple case of trespass into reserved forest, collection and removal of a small quantity of forest produce or cutting of a tree and the culprit is caught red handed, the cases of this nature are ordinarily dealt with by forest officers under the provisions of the Forest Act. On the other hand, when a large number of accused and mischievous elements are involved and when they turn hostile and violent, we must take it as a

challenge and prepare ourselves to face the situation with equal force, and get ready for criminal action. Here, the need for a thorough knowledge of other laws becomes inevitable. Once the case is filed in the court, procedure as laid down in the Code of Criminal Procedure will have to be followed. As for the recording, of evidence is concerned, the provisions as laid down in the Evidence Act will have to be, adhered to. If the case ends in conviction and sentence of imprisonment, it is for the accused to go in appeal or to suffer the punishment. If the accused is acquitted and if there are sufficient grounds for appeal, the department will file appeal against acquittal in consultation with the Public Prosecutor. People take advantage of extraordinary power of High Court under Art. 226 of the Constitution of India and file writ petitions to assert their rights, mostly on grounds which are untrue, unreasonable and dubious. All such cases must be zealously and promptly opposed by filing counter affidavits in consultation with the Government Pleader. One recent development in the forest legislation is empowering forest officers to confiscate property used in commission of forest offences. This is an important change made in the Forest Act. In dealing with such

cases, the authorized officer acts as a quasi-judicial authority and his proceedings are treated as quasi-judicial proceedings. Orders passed by the authorized officers are subject to scrutiny by presiding judges of Courts.

Therefore, orders to be passed should be so drafted that they stand to the rigours of the judicial scrutiny. This facility of confiscating properties is available only for offences punishable under the Forest Act and not for offences under the Wildlife Protection Act.

Forest Rights Act is a law passed by the parliament under political pressure and is a product of populism. My colleague Sri J.V.Sharma has been following it up right from the time when the Bill was drafted. He has predicted the ill effects of the law and they are all proved true. He is the pioneer for challenging the constitutional validity of the Act which is also taken up by other states in the country. The matter is pending in the Supreme Court since some years. Under the garb of the Act, vast extents of lands are destroyed. Sri Sharma has highlighted with statistics the incurable and irreversible damage that is caused to the forests in the country.

Forest Conservation Act was conceived with a noble objective to conserve forests; how far have we achieved the goal to conserve the forests is a difficult question to be answered. By virtue of this Act, the powers of the state governments to

de-reserve forests and to divert forest lands for non-forest purpose are assumed by the central government. These powers are exercisable by the state governments only with prior permission of the central government. Elaborate procedure and guidelines on the subject are in place. The demand for forest lands for developmental works like irrigation projects, industries etc. are growing and the pressure on forests is mounting. 'Sustainable Development' is a beautiful phrase; 'Compensatory Afforestation' is another expression we often hear in the corridors of power. Supreme Court has given guidelines on the 'net present value' of the forests lost. There are schemes for implementing the provisions of the Forest Conservation Act to take up compensatory afforestation.

The latest law added to the statute book is the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016; but the rules for implementing the provisions of the Act are not ready as yet. As very truthfully and with lot of wisdom it is commented in the press (The Hindu dated Dec. 29, 2017) that, *replacing a natural forest with plantation does not really serve the cause of nature, wildlife, or the forest-dwelling communities, who depend on it, because of the sheer loss of biodiversity.*

There are sufficiently old laws relating to Land Revenue Administration, Estates abolition, Zamindari abolition, Jagirs abolition, Inams

abolition, *Muttas* abolition, *Mahals* Abolition. *Ijara* abolition etc. These Acts are said to be progressive laws legislated in a democratic set up. They have left behind some legacies after they are rescinded.

I wish to share with the readers my experience in dealing with cases of *Ijara*. There was a law in Nizam's Government called the Deserted Villages *Ijara* Regulation. This law was passed in spite of protest by Forest Department. Consequently large areas were brought under cultivation by destroying forests and habitat of wildlife. Although the scheme of the law was abolished, some miscreants created dubious documents and claimed ownership of vast lands by intervention of Courts. I studied the subject in depth while working as Asst. CCF and saved about 8,000 acres of forest land from falling in

the hands of private ownership. That was the end of the *Ijara* cases in the Telangana Area. Lately I found, almost 25 years after my retirement, there is one more case of *Ijara* background left in the State of Telangana and the case is pending in the Hyderabad High Court during the past 15 years. The claim is ownership over forest land of an extent of Acres 38 but the value of the standing timber is worth a few crores of rupees. I helped the DFO to oppose the claim. And to strengthen the case of the Forest Department, I filed a PIL against the Government and the Revenue Dept. Officials, who supported the wrongful claim of private persons. It is a case of Public Interest vs. Private interest. My appeal to the retired forest officers is to strengthen department's hands wherever it is possible.

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We can avoid plastic bags to plant saplings and finding a way to dispose of tender coconut shells which will decompose naturally.

(Collected and Contributed by AkulaKishan)

TELANGANA KU HARITHA HARAM - OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLE

By
M. Padmanabha Reddy

Emperor Ashoka, it is said, planted trees along road sides to provide shade to travellers. Planting and protecting trees is an ancient practice in India. Scriptures and historical documents provide accounts of rulers planting trees and setting aside forests as sacred groves for sages who provide spiritual guidance and disseminate knowledge.

Britishers having looted the Indian forests of its valuable hard woods have brought Dietrich Brandis a German botanist as the first Inspector General of Forests in 1864 for scientific management of Indian forests. Wooded areas hitherto protected and managed by local communities were taken over and declared as Reserve forests usurping the rights of local communities over the forests. In the year 1927 Indian Forest act was enacted, the stress was to manage the forests for supply of raw material to wood based industries. There is no provision for genuine needs of villagers especially the *Adivasis*. Quality teak wood was allotted to plywood industries at throughway price while common man has to purchase the timber at exorbitant price. Bamboo taxonomically a grass is treated as tree in the Act and made permit mandatory for its felling and transportation.

While paper mills are given bamboo at throughway price, the native tribes who need bamboo for hutting and other uses were treated as offenders of forest produce whenever they bring few bamboos from nearby forests and cases booked. At last, relief came on 27th December, 2017 Rajya Sabha passed the Indian Forest (Amendment) bill 2017 which excluded bamboo from the definition of tree. The move is expected to promote bamboo cultivation.

Partition of India at the time of independence saw many fertile agricultural fields of West Punjab and Sindh going to new born Pakistan. With this loss, India faced food scarcity. To improve food availability, Agriculture was given top priority in five year plans. Mega projects like Bhakra Nangal, Hirakud etc. were constructed. Extensive agriculture made inroads into virgin forests and large tracts of forests were cut and brought under plough. Added to it, forest lands were diverted to roads, canals, transmission lines etc. as nation took up infrastructure development.

To compensate forest loss Vanamahotsava (Festival of trees) was started in 1950 by Kulapati Dr. K.M. Munshi, then the Union Minister

for agriculture to create enthusiasm among masses for planting trees. The country celebrates Vanamahostava in first week of July every year, where in people participate in planting of trees in vacant lands, schools, public utility places etc. But then as time passed Vanamahotsva became a ritual to be performed by foresters.

To recommend increasing agriculture productivity and allied subjects Government of India constituted National Commission on Agriculture (NCA) in the year 1970. NCA released its final report in fifteen parts in 1976. Chapter VII of the report deals with forestry. NCA first used the term social forestry in 1976. It was then that India embarked upon a social forestry project with the aim of taking the pressure off the forests and making use of all unused and fallow lands. Government forest areas that are close to human settlement have been degraded over the years due to human activities needed to be afforested. Trees were to be planted in and around agricultural fields, plantation of trees along railway lines and road sides, river and canal banks were carried out. They were planted in village common lands, government waste lands and Panchayat lands.

Social forestry also aims at raising plantations by common man so as to meet the growing demand for timber, fuel-wood, fodder etc. there by reducing the pressure on the traditional forest area. This concept of village forests to meet the

needs of rural population is not new. It has existed through the centuries all over the country but it was given a new character.

With the introduction of social forestry government formally recognized the local communities' rights to forest resources and is now encouraging rural participation in the community forest management and management of natural resources. Through the S.F. scheme the government has involved community participation as a part of drive towards afforestation and rehabilitating the degraded forests and common lands. Due to various reasons including the lack of interest of foresters, C.F.M. has not picked up as expected. Social Forestry scheme can be categorized into groups. Farm forestry, Community forestry, Extension forestry and Agroforestry. The aim of Social Forestry is to plant more number of trees with people participation and to pass on the benefits to them.

Social Forestry programme was introduced in the erstwhile A.P. in the year 1985 with the financial assistance from CANADA (CIDA scheme). Special divisions were created to implement the programe. Crores of seedlings were raised and distributed free of cost. Remuneration was paid to farmers who planted trees in their marginal and follow lands. Schools, *Mahilamandals*, Youth clubs etc. participated in the prograame. Departments like R&B irrigation and railways participated in a big way. Social

Forestry scheme made a considerable difference in overall forest cover in short time many farmers took up silviculture in place of dry land agriculture. Today many wood based industries are depending on tree crops raised by farmers. New born state of Telangana took up a massive tree planting programme to increase the area under forests to 33% from present 24%. Telangana Ku Haritha Haram proposes to plant 230 crore seedlings, out of which 100 crore seedlings will be planted in R.F. areas to rejuvenate degraded forests and balance 130 crore seedlings will be planted outside the R.F. areas. It is proposed to plant 40 thousand seedlings in each village and 40 lakhs in each assembly constituency. Telangana Ku Haritha Haram started in 2015 with duration of 5 years. Planting models were the same as carried out in earlier social forestry programme, the difference being implementation. Earlier Social forestry was mostly a forest department programme whereas Haritha Haram programme is a government programme where in about 30 departments of the government are participating. The district administration was involved for better co-ordination of the programme. Hon'able Chief Minister of Telangana took the programme in right earnest

by providing required funds and reviewing it constantly. To involve people and public representatives, from village level to state level, committees were formed for effective implementation. While reviewing the performance of legislators, progress of Haritha Haram was also included as one of the indicators.

Series of news items appearing in press are ringing alarm bells on the state of forests in Telangana. It is reported that Haryana tops in diversion of forest lands followed by Telangana and Madhya Pradesh. Over all 8,400 ha. of forest land was diverted for non-forestry purpose in the past three years in Telangana as against diversion of 24,000 ha., in united A.P. in 34 years. Most of the lands identified for compensatory afforestation, appears to be not suitable for afforestation. Barren and eroded hill slopes and sheet rocks are part of land identified for afforestation where grass is struggling to come up.

Telangana Ku Haritha Haram whether it is a new programme or extension of existing social forestry programme, people of the state should participate whole heartedly and make it a success so that forest cover (tree cover) in the state is improved.

The key to a positive, joyful life is 'WILPOWER'. It makes you to choose courage over fear, faith over doubt, and hope over despair.

THE FRAGRANCE OF THE DUST.....

By
V.V.Hariprasad

Having entered the premises of "The temple of learning" for forestry, the S.F.R.C Coimbatore on 15th February I bowed down my head before the mammoth building with great reverence, as it is the great institute which taught me the basics of forestry and which moulded the lives of thousands of "Foresters" who have been the custodians of forest wealth of independent India for the last number of decades. I was to attend to the "Re-union meet" of S.F.R.C (75-77) batch mates after 40 years of completion of our training period.

The meet was attended by 43 of our batch mates along with their respective spouses of some of them totally numbering seventy to reminisce with regard to their stay in the college. This is 5th such meet the first one being at Biotrim Tirupati in the year 2000 followed by the reunion meets in Hyderabad, Somnath in Gujarat, and at Aurangabad in Maharashtra.

The Reunion meet was conducted from 16th to 18th of February at S.F.R.C Coimbatore premises and all the participants were accommodated in the college campus itself. All the participants arrived to Gajendra hostel buildings by 16th morning where the present batches of FRO and Forester trainees are accommodated. Sri Premnath formerly DFO Coimbatore, Sri Soundarapandian I.F.S formerly DFO Ooty assisted by Sri Goonjkar and Sri Kishandas organized the event by taking care of all the requirements in a meticulous manner. After their arrival all the batch mates were provided with

Green T-shirts with yellow collars and all of them posed for a group photo later in the evening wearing them.

The get together took place in the evening and all the participants posed for a group photo which was followed by an inaugural meet in the evening. The meeting was attended by Director IFGTB centre as Chief guest, Sri Kaliyappan and Sri Saravanan formerly instructors as guests of honour. The lecture delivered by the Chief Guest a senior IFS officer was quite interesting. He narrated his experiences he experienced when he acted as a co-ordinator for the meet of IFS officers of 50 year standing inclusive of the period after their retirement. He had to contact number of them who were septuagenarians or octogenarians in the process of collecting the information such as their addresses and contact numbers. Numbers of them after receiving, the phone calls were asking either their spouses or their grandchildren to furnish the information needed because of their inability either to hear or to see.

The Director said that then he could perceive the importance of the fact as to why in the olden days elders used to insist upon the bride to be sufficiently younger to the bridegroom for getting married adding that it should be probably with an intention that the wife could help the husband during the period of his advanced age.



Reunion of 1975-77 batch of SFRC from 16th Feb to 18 Feb at Coimbatore



Students of SFRC returned from play grounds just after day's games

The enthusiasm of the participants made them to start early in the morning on the following day by boarding the buses proceeding to Topslip. On reaching Topslip we could recollect the memories of our stay in the tents over there and hardships that we have faced at the time of orienteering. The narration of Sri Kishandas about the chase of him by the wild gaur at the time of orienteering was one such a horrendous experience to be listened to. The pristine glory of the high forests of Karianshola was enjoyed by the participants including some of the zealous women when they went for trekking.

When we proceeded to Parambikulam the efforts of the eco development committees in promoting eco-tourism were conspicuously visible. The enthusiasm of the women participants undeterred by the road repair work being carried out to the forest roads and consequent waiting in the midst of the forests to proceed to elephant camp and to see the feeding of the animals was to be seen to be believed.

The sustained interest of the participants prompted them to be ready in the morning on the following day to proceed to reach Sadivayal

which was the first camping place of the budding foresters in the tents erected over there. Our joy knew no bounds when we saw Kunjaramalai a mammoth hillock which every FRO trainee was bound to climb and reach its top. The water fall and the flowing water made the onlookers including the tourists to evince interest to spend maximum possible time while enjoying the serene beauty of the vegetation and tree growth there. "Tamilnadu is a haven for botanists and also is an abode of pristine forests indeed" most of us surmised.

On the evening of the last day when all of us were departing to our respective destinations we profusely thanked Sri Premnath the head of the organizing batch mates of Tamilnadu for his commitment, humility and perseverance with which he strove hard in making the event a grand success.

We slowly left the premises of the great institute with heavy hearts while enjoying the fragrance of the dust released from the soil on which we ran daily in the morning for about two years being part our P.T exercise while abiding by the commands of the multilingual the then PTI Mr. Emmanuel a great soul indeed.

The biggest advantage of walking on the path of honesty is that there is no crowd...Enjoy the peaceful journey with almost no traffic.

DEPARTMENTAL EXTRACTION— BAMBOO SMUGGLING

By
V.SANTHASEELA BABU

Between the years 1982 and 1984 I worked as Forest Range Officer, Rudravaram Range of Allagadda Taluq, in Nadyal Forest Division and Kurnool District. Just before my joining the Range, a Logging Range, Rudravaram was formed and the Departmental extraction operations, hitherto executed by the Territorial Range Officer, were entrusted to the Logging Range Officer working under the control of the Divisional Forest Officer, Logging Division, Nandyal. The Logging Range Officer was a very senior Range Officer whom I used to treat with due respect. He was looking after his duties and I was looking after my duties without interfering in each other's routine.

One day the Logging Range Officer came to my residence to meet me. At that time a trunk call was received from the Divisional Forest Officer, Flying Squad Division, Cuddapah. He informed that there have been some cases booked by his squad involving excess number of bamboos in the Lorries that were being transported on the permits issued by the Govt. Timber Depot, Rudravaram and advised me to keep a watch on the same. I told him that the Logging Range Officer is right before me and he can talk to him.

The Logging Range Officer replied the DFO saying that the Lorries are leaving the Timber Depot absolutely with exact quantities mentioned in the permits and said that they might be loading the excess bamboos outside the Depot. But subsequently my discrete enquiries revealed that it is being done with the knowledge of the concerned logging Range staff and they are loading the excess bamboo in to the Lorries from the Depot itself.

One day during my field inspections I noticed huge stocks of bamboo in the RF at a distance of about 6 to 7 Kms. away from the current year bamboo coupe. When I enquired the staff they said that it is the handy work of the bamboo extraction contractors of logging division. But there is no proof to that effect. If reported, they will simply through the blame for the destruction on the territorial staff only. So I thought I should wait for an opportunity to book them red handed while they are in the process of lifting the material at the scene of offence. I instructed the staff to keep the fact of my inspection of this material confidential without divulging to anybody so that the culprits would be at ease and they may make attempts to lift the material.

I returned from the spot and while I was reaching my headquarters in the night, I noticed an empty lorry entering the RF. I stopped the lorry and when enquired, they said that this lorry is engaged by the logging staff for transport of the Departmental extracted bamboo and they are going to the coupe for transporting the felled bamboo. The concerned coupe *maistry* was also available in the lorry. Somehow I felt that they may attempt to transport the bamboo that was felled outside the coupe. To mislead them and make them doubly sure that I am not going to come in to the forest during that night, I told the *maistry* that I will be coming for inspection of the forest the next day morning and asked him to bring the empty lorry to my office by tomorrow 8 am when they go to fetch the next trip of bamboo consignment for which the driver and the *maistry* readily agreed.

After I came back home, I sent one of my staff to get a Jeep from Allagadda and gathered some reliable village elders, to be *Panchas* (Independent witnesses) and some of my staff. In the meanwhile a Jeep has arrived from Allagadda and all of us started our journey in to the forest during the night. There were no signs of presence of the lorry en route in the area of current year Bamboo coupe. Then I was sure that this lorry should have gone to lift the material outside the coupe which we have traced out in the afternoon. So I felt that my expectation is

coming true. We stopped our Jeep at a place where nobody could locate and all of us proceeded to the spot by walk. Slowly the darkness was vanishing and it was getting in to dawn. After walking for some time we heard the noise of the coolies loading bamboo in to the lorry. While we were approaching the lorry, someone noticed our presence and shouted "Hey! The Ranger is coming" and as soon as this was heard by others, all of them took to their heels and started disappearing from the scene of offence. My staff chased them and caught hold of some of them and fortunately the driver of the lorry and the *maistry* were among those caught. When enquired they confessed that these bamboos were felled by the labour engaged by them for departmental extraction. I conducted a '*panchanama*' of the incidents that happened and prepared a map of the scene of offence attested by the independent witnesses taken along with me. The statements of all the accused nabbed by us were also recorded under the attestation by the '*panchas*'. All the bamboo stock available in the lorry and also lying at the scene of offence was duly counted and seized by me along with the lorry. By the time we returned to my headquarters it was somewhere in the evening. I registered an Offence Case and prepared a detailed report about the incident and sent to my DFO with a special messenger. After some time the

Logging Range Officer and his staff and some bamboo contractors came to me and started requesting me to take a lenient view and help them to come out of this muddle. I made it clear to them that the ball is in the court of my DFO as I have already submitted my report to him narrating the incident and registered an offence case. I also told them that, had I not seized the lorry at the scene of offence, my staff would have been taken to task and made responsible for all those felling and would have been penalized. I was very stubborn and did not heed to their request.

Next day I proceeded to Nandyal and appraised my DFO personally about the case in detail and the DFO commended my action. Subsequently I got the felling enumerated by my staff and test checked them. After a week or so I received a message from my DFO that he is coming to Rudravaram along with the logging DFO for a joint inspection and I was asked to be in readiness to follow them to the field with connected records pertaining to this case.

Accordingly the next day both the DFOs came to the field and along with all the case records and maps of the Bamboo Coupes I accompanied them. The logging Range Officer also accompanied with his staff. In the field, I have explained and shown them the original boundaries of the current year coupe.

From there I took them to the scene of offence

where the lorry was getting loaded and shown the felling along with the enumeration list. Though both of them were tight lipped during the inspections, I felt with their expressions, that they were convinced about the irregularity that took place. However we returned to my headquarters and in the evening both the DFOs left from there.

I submitted the case records to my DFO for taking further action. After a week's time, orders were received from the DFO compounding the case for Rs. 10,000/- duly confiscating the produce (the Bamboos) and ordering for the release of the lorry. (The quantum of Compounding Fee of Rs.10,000/- was very heavy in those days). The driver and the owner of the lorry, in compliance with the orders issued, have paid the compounding fee and the lorry was released.

After a month or so, the Conservator of Forests along with the Logging DFO came for inspections in my Range. I think it was his first camp in my Range after he assumed charge of the Circle. When the DFO introduced me to him, he said: "Oh! You are the Range Officer who seized the Departmental Extraction lorry and created so much of '*galata*'? What is the great crime he (Range Officer) had committed in it? After all, the produce that is to be extracted next year, he is extracting in advance during this year."

I became speechless after hearing these words from a Senior Officer of the Department!!!

AYUBÔVAN

(Sri Lankan Salutation –greeting the recipient a long life)

Our tour to Sri Lanka

By K. Pradeep

On an unpretentious impulse triggered by one of our group in June 2017, –[the GROUP is a group of our batch mates -: 1. A. Kishan, 2. K. Pradeep, 3. MVSN Acaharyulu, 4. D. Basavashankar Rao, 5.E.N.Srinivasulu, 6. K. Narasimharao, 7. I.Janardhan- with spouses - who have a strong and a keen travel bug] – wanted to visit this tiny neighbouring island nation! Somehow I was entrusted to plan and organize this tour. At that time I was in Australia- but I launched my planning from Australia.

I have a good friend who resides in the same apartment block in Hyderabad, who operates international tours. I dropped this tour schedule in his lap and asked him to prepare a 6 or 7 day tour to Sri Lanka for the 14 members. After much surfing, sifting and read-throughs, we finalized the itinerary of 6 nights and 7 days.

We flew off on 10th January 2018 by Sri Lankan airlines from Hyderabad at 10.00 am and landed in Bandarnaike International airport, Colombo, at 11.30, and were received by our local guide Mr Sena. As per our request a 24 seat Van was arranged, to accommodate our baggage as well as an assistant to accompany us for loading and unloading of the baggage till the conclusion of our tour.

The weather in Colombo is similar to our coastal towns – a bit hot and humid. The things that prompted me to bring out this article is the overall picture of Sri Lanka! As we have arranged to have our VISAs processed at Hyderabad itself, we just have to walk through the airport – no Customs' hassle – and were received by our

guide, Mr Sena. The guide Mr Sena, is about 63 years old, but looks very young, and stylish in his "Jewel Thief" cap-[worn by Devanand]. Mr Sena is very polite and genial. The van which is arranged is an air conditioned Toyota, in pristine condition and with very comfortable seats. Soon our luggage was loaded by the driver, the assistant and Mr. Sena in to the back seats, and we were seated comfortably. We were on our way to Anuradhapura.

DAY I:- from airport to Anuradhapura –enroute had a lunch - with some Indian dishes, and visited Munishwaram temple. It is believed that Munishwaram predates the Ramayana and a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva is located here. Munishwaram means the first temple for Shiva (Munnu + Eashwaran). A Shiva Lingam was already here when Lord Rama visited this place. Lord Rama after his victorious battle left for Ayodhya with Sita in one of King Ravana's Vimanas. He felt he was being followed by a Bramhaasthi Dosham (a malevolent black shadow) as he had killed King Ravana who was a Brahmin. After our venerations at Munishwaram, we proceeded to our next location Manavari Temple. When the Vimana was passing over Munishwaram, he felt the Vimana vibrating, and realized the Brahmaasthi Dosham was not following him at this particular point. He stopped the Vimana at this juncture and asked Lord Shiva for advice. Lord Shiva blessed Lord Rama and advised installing and praying at four lingams located at Manavari, Thiru Koneshwaram, Thiru Ketheshwaram and

Rameshwaram in India as the only remedy to get rid of the *dosham*. Thence to Anuradhapura - Anuradhapura is one of the ancient capitals of Sri Lanka, famous for its well-preserved ruins of ancient Sri Lankan civilization. It was 3rd capital of the Kingdom of Rajarata after Tambapanni and Upatissa Nuwara. The roads in Sri Lanka are very clean and smooth- no pot holes – no jarring horns to be heard. No snarling of vehicle drivers/ public. People are VERY polite and amenable- always ready to proffer! If a pedestrian ambles on to the road inadvertently, the vehicles- may it be a motorbike or an Auto or a van- they stop with a SMILE and allow the jay walker to cross the road. This phenomenon we noticed throughout! The Police in their trim Uniform always with a white helmet are present on the roads- but never heard a police whistle—they just control the traffic with a gentle wave of their hands.

Anuradhapura- now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, lies 205 km north of Colombo in Sri Lanka's North Central Province, on the banks of the historic Malvathu Oya. It is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world and one of the eight World Heritage Sites of Sri Lanka.

From the 4th century BC, it was the capital of Sri Lanka until the beginning of the 11th century AD. Our accommodation was arranged at Miriam Resort & spa. The efficiency at the hotel was simply amazing. Our guide rang the resort and informed of our arrival—and by the time we arrived at the resort, we were welcomed with perfumed cold wraps to wipe our tired faces and were offered some cold orange juice. The hotel service is simply superb. Once I have presented my passport – only one passport would do – the entire mechanism swung into action! Our baggage was tagged with our room numbers, and we were requested to proceed to our respective rooms and relax. The rooms were also very good- cosy- comfortable- tidy with fresh linen – as well as the bathrooms! In no time our baggage was placed outside our rooms, and a gentle knock on the door to confirm their arrival. After a long shower we went to the dining room and dined with several continental delicacies, variety of fruit, desserts etc., - forthose who relish sea food- Sri Lanka has a variety of dishes!



DAY 2:-The Guide advised us to get ready by 7.30am next day, and to leave the baggage outside our rooms, handover the keys in the reception and have breakfast. Breakfast, is again continental- several types of bread, butter, jam, marmalade, omelettes, fruit juice, coffee, tea, milk- also bacon and some chicken dishes! After breakfast when we came to reception, we found our baggage neatly placed and the room boys hovering over them requesting us to confirm there were no baggage missing. Once that was confirmed, all the baggage was neatly packed into our van, and after a couple of group photos we all got into our van.

Our first visit on day 2- was Trincomalee- Koneswaram temple. It is one of the 18 Devi temples-**Ashtadasa Shakti Peethas**- located on a small hillock overlooking Indian Ocean- its azurite waters shimmering in the late morning sun is breath taking! After performing the ritual offerings in the temples, proceeded to Sri Muthumariamman temple, Matale – about 150 kms. **The maximum speed limit in Sri Lanka is 60kmph!!** There are only 2 express highways in Sri Lanka, and there the speed limit is 110 kmph. Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi is our next visit -a sacred fig tree in the Mahamevna Gardens, Anuradhapura. It is said to be the right-wing branch (southern branch) from the historical Sri Maha Bodhi at Buddha Gaya in India under which Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment. It was planted in 288 BC. Today it is one of the most sacred relics of the Buddhists in Sri Lanka and venerated by Buddhists all over the world. Thence proceeded to Habarana and Halt. This resort is simply amazing-luxurious, with excellent hospitality, great food, very ambient—rooms are very comfortable!! Had a good dinner with several Indian, Sri Lankan and continental dishes-

Day 3:- After a sumptuous breakfast- both Indian and continental the luggage is loaded- The tour of the day 3 is

SIRIGIYA ROCK: Sirigiya or Sinhagiri is an ancient rock fortress located in the northern Matale District near the town of Dambulla in the Central Province, of Sri Lanka. The name refers to a site of historical and archaeological significance that is dominated by a massive column of rock nearly 200 meters (660 ft.) high. The climb is a bit strenuous and difficult. We decided not to venture – besides it is time consuming.

DAMBULLA CAVES: also known as the Golden Temple of Dambulla is a World Heritage Site (1991) in Sri Lanka, situated in the central part of the country. It is a one Kilometre climb on coarse stone steps. Only 8 of our group went up! The view from the top is marvellous- overlooking lush green tree tops. It has five caves under a vast overhanging rock, carved with a drip line to keep the interiors dry. In 1938 the architecture was embellished with arched colonnades and gabled entrances. Inside the caves, the ceilings are painted with intricate patterns of religious images following the contours of the rock. It reminds us of Ajanta paintings. There are images of the Lord Buddha and bodhisattvas, as well as various gods and goddesses.

Matale: A town predominantly of Tamil Hindu population. It is surrounded by green lush hill range with beautiful scenic backdrop. Sri Muthumariamman temple is the deity here. Unfortunately by the time we reached the, temple was closed. All through Sri Lanka, in general all temples close by 12 noon and reopen at 4pm. The temple was severely damaged during the anti-Tamil riots in July

1983 but has been subsequently restored. One of the most visually dominant features of this temple is its 55 m (180 ft.) high Gopuram ('Raja Koburum'), a large decorated tower located above the main northern gateway (Vadakku Veli Veedi') to the temple. The Raja Koburum is one of the largest Gopurams in Sri Lanka. The **1008 statues** of Hindu deities are the work of South Indian sculptor, Nagalingam and his son Ramanathan, with the help of about 100 designers, painters and architects from Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. The Raja Koburum was completed in 2007 at the cost of approximately Rs 150 Million. There is a Tamil restaurant nearby- and we could have Idly/ Dosa sambar for a change and thence proceeded to Kandy about 25 kms. away.

Kandy: Kandy is a large city in central Sri Lanka. It is set on a plateau surrounded by mountains, which are home to tea plantations and bio diverse rainforest. In the city's heart is scenic Kandy Lake (Bogambara Lake), popular for strolling. Kandy is famed for sacred Buddhist sites, including the Temple of the Tooth (Sri Dalada Maligawa) shrine, celebrated with the grand Esala Perahera annual procession – an annual fete involving Festival of Tooth.

Our first visit in Kandy was to Gem museum - Sri Lanka's gem industry has a very long and colourful history. Sri Lanka was affectionately known as **Ratna-Dweepa** which means Island of gems. The name is a reflection of its natural wealth. Marco Polo wrote that the island had the best sapphires, topazes, amethysts, and other gems in the world. But there are no diamonds. We were explained how the various gems are mined, cleaned, selected and cut! Some of our group members purchased gems. Next visit was to Sri Lanka Cultural arts - a 60 minute

programme- but very exhilarating and colourful dance program on Sri Lankan culture. The high light of the day is visit to **Sri Dalada Maligawa** or the **Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic** - a Buddhist temple in the city of Kandy. It is located in the royal palace complex of the former Kingdom of Kandy, which houses the relic of the tooth of the Buddha. Halt Kandy. A3 star hotel. Some renovation is going on and not as good as other hotels we stayed.

Day 4:- In **Kandy**, visited local wood crafts emporium, thence commenced the long journey to **Nuwara Eliya** about 80 kms. Nuwara Eliya is a city in the tea hills of central Sri Lanka. The naturally landscaped Hakgala Botanical Gardens displays roses and tree ferns, and shelters monkeys and blue magpies.

Ramboda: we see several cascading waterfalls on the way- and to Hanuman temple, atop the Wevandon Hills in Ramboda. Elevation: 1,868 m. The road is a serpentine ghat road with enthralling scenic beauty passing through lush natural forests, interspersed with tea estates. On the way visited Hanuman Temple, Ramboda village - constructed and maintained by Chinmaya mission. A very tall and beautiful Hanuman statue – black granite- is a feast to the tourist's . The surrounding area is very picturesque- with widespread water bodies- lush forests. There is an Indian Hotel near by the temple serving South Indian Thali!

Blue Field Tea Factory: visited the tea factory – a conducted tour, explained the tea making. From collection to packing- complimented with a cup of tea. .

Seetaammal temple- where Seeta Devi was supposed to have stayed till Hanuman visited.

Night halt at Nuwara Eliya – for a change we experienced a pleasantly chill weather. This

place is also called Little England. We can see several colonial structures built by English, and are still maintained in their original grandeur.

Day 5:-From Nuwara Eliya to MADU RIVER — Boat safari along the Madu River is a relaxing trip with plenty of interesting stops. You pass dozens of islets forested with mangroves. These islets are privately owned! One can appreciate the timeless natural rhythms of rural life. You cruise in a canopied, outboard motor powered boat. You can see prawn farming and traditional fishing techniques in action. And also the processing of Cinnamon bark and oil on these islets. The waters are clean with no garbage or rubbish. Next visit is to:

ELEPHANT ORPHANAGE— The Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage was established by the Sri Lankan Department of Wildlife Conservation in 1975 for feeding and providing care and sanctuary to orphaned baby elephants that were found in the wild. The orphanage was located at the Wilpattu National Park, then shifted to the tourist complex at Bentota and then to the Dehiwala Zoo. Every day all the elephants- about 40 in numbers are taken to the river across the road about 250 mtrs. allow the elephants to bathe in the river and around 4 pm, they are taken back to their orphanage, where they are fed. Tourists are permitted to witness this ritual with an entry fee. From there we proceeded to BENTOTA and halt.

DAY 6 BENTOTA:- A 5star beach resort, with all the comforts- excellent dining hall, swimming pool, spa- overlooking the Indian Ocean. The rooms were splendid. We stayed the night, and next day morning being Pongal- the women folk performed the necessary rituals in the hotel. Before breakfast, went for a stroll along the shore,

and after a hefty breakfast- once again the menu for breakfast was exhaustive, we left for Colombo.

COLOMBO: We were taken on a city tour- this is NOT the capitol of Sri Lanka.! Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte is the Capitol, adjacent to Colombo. The colonial buildings of Portuguese and English are very much in evidence. The important festival is celebration of Lord Buddha's birth. Every Full moon day is a Public Holiday. We were put up in Hotel Berjaya- the last night in this marvellous island. After dinner, went to bed early. The flight the next day is at 7.30am, and we had an hour's drive to reach Airport- so we have to leave hotel by 5.30am!

DAY 7:-Started by 5am with our breakfast packed. Reached airport by 6am—and bid farewell to the crew- the guide, the driver and the helper- who have made our entire trip very memorable and enjoyable.

OUR OVERALL IMPRESSION OF THIS ISLAND

NATION: Sri Lanka is a remarkably safe place to travel in, and violent crime against foreigners is virtually unheard of, this is still a place of peace and tranquillity, despite 25 years of brutal civil war. We don't find any traces of the Civil war. Education is free up to graduation. The people in Sri Lanka are very welcoming, leisurely, and peaceful- Traffic is much disciplined. Especially for us from Hyderabad- IT IS SIMPLY AWESOME. The Autos are very beautiful and cute. We did not hear the horns even in a traffic jam! No Cheating, but bargaining yes!!

We are all happy and pleased that we had such a wonderful overseas trip within such a low budget.

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			
1.	C.Laxma Reddy	09-03-1934	12.	M.Guru Prabhakar 28-03-1965
2.	S.Ashiah	15-03-1949	13.	Gadamsetty Rama Moahan Rao 29-03-1957
3.	D.V.Jayaram Prasad	15-03-1942	11.	G.Satish 29-03-1984
4.	S.M.Rasheedullah	15-03-1939	12.	B.Venkataramana 31-03-1960
5.	M.Sitarama Rao	19-03-1933	13.	V.Srinivasa Rao 01-04-1965
6.	I.Janardhan	23-03-1954	14.	Ch.Prakasa Rao 02-04-1963
7.	K.Muralidhar Rao	01-04-1946	15.	Y.Srinivasa Reddy 03-04-1971
8.	B.Rangiah	05-04-1946	16.	Chalumari Santhi Swaroop 05-04-1968

S.No.	Name of Serving Officers	D.O.B.
1.	B.Shafiullah	13-03-1976
2.	Smt.Shivani Dogra	17-03-1980
3.	Vinay Kumar	26-03-1968
4.	Ravi Sankara Madugula	07-03-1967
5.	P.Srinivasa Rao	10-03-1966
6.	B.Chandrasekhar	13-03-1962
7.	B.Dhanunjaya Rao	15-03-1960
8.	Ch.Nagabushanam	15-03-1967
9.	R. Ravinder	24-03-1962
10.	K.Ravinder	27-03-1961
11.	D.Phani Kumar Naidu	27-03-1988

Secretary



MAY GOD SAVE.....

BY
V.V.HARIPRASAD

The day has come,
I was eagerly waiting for.
The budget was presented before the August body, the parliament,
Worried I was about the spiralling prices of groceries,
Focus of the FM was on inflation, Gross domestic product and GST.
My monthly budget has been my concern whereas,
Thrust of the FM was on fiscal discipline.
What all he said was Greek and Latin to me,
After all I am a middle class man,
I wish "May God come to my rescue and my familial ones."

Though educated I am,
Rarely had I time to exercise my franchise.
Does the candidate belong to our religion, caste, or creed?
Has been my concern if at all I were to vote
Elections were festive occasions too for a lot of us the poor,
The under privileged have been the scapegoats,
Because of pouring of money by career politicians to win,
To make substantial dividends later by all means, at all costs,
I am afraid they go for SWOT analysis.
A profitable venture "The career politics" has become indeed,
I know not whether seeds of corruption were sown then,
I have been unable to comprehend,
When the erudite person says, "we reap what we sow."
I belong to the ambivalent "The Indian electorate",
May God enlighten the electorate!!

I am an ardent believer in "Swach Bharat",
I want my country to rid the dirty and corrupt lot,
Let him be a bureaucrat or a politician.
Of course bribery is part of my day to day life, I admit.
I am at a loss to understand,
As to how I can dispense with it,
After all I am part and parcel of this system.
If a bureaucrat candidly asks
"Am I not an intellectual of this country?
Is the salary I receive not a pittance?
Am I not bound to become rich,
At all costs come what may?
Why should I bother about a common man?
After all I am elite"
"May God save my country and its downtrodden"
Laments the common man whereas,
The reluctance of GOD is apparent probably with a message,
"It is your baby you have to carry it."



CONSERVATION ISSUES OF KOLLERU LAKE

By

K.Mrutyumjaya Rao

Kolleru Lake the largest fresh water lake in India was spread over 901 sq. km up to +10 contour level in both Krishna and west Godavari districts. The water level also reaches up to 10.7 contour spreading up to 954 sq. km during heavy and flooded rains. The lake was fed by Budameleru, Tammileru, Ramileru, Gundeleru and Bulusuvagu rivulets and other number of drains. In which Budameru and Thammilerru were most important inputs. Budameru is originates in Krishna district surrounding hills of Mailavaram area. Thammileru is from Khammam district of Telangana from Bethapalli Cheruvu. To control floods of Budameru a diversion canal was constructed about 20 years back at Velagaleru (near Vijayawada) and the canal merges into Krishna River upstream of Prakasam barrage. A dam was constructed at Nagireddy Gudem in 1980 on Thammileru to irrigate the fields.

Status of Kolleru:

Sanctuary: Notified on 04-10-1999 (308 sq km up to +5 contour level)

Ramsar site: 19-08-2002 (Entire lake)

Identified as National wetland 1986

Identified as IBA (Important Bird Area) by BNHS

The capacity or storage of water in the

Kolleru Lake: The water flow into the lake is in the rainy season depending on the rains from

65000 cusecs to 1.1lakh cusecs of water.

Up to + 3 contour level (135 Sq. km) 150 mm³

+5contour level (308 sq.km) 300 mm³ (9.6 TMC)

+ 7 contour level (673 sq km) 508 mm³ (17.9 TMC)

+9 contour level 1222 mm³ (43.5 TMC)

The lake will spread up to + 10th contour level (901 Sq. km) during heavy rain falls, with a capacity of 54 TMC of water.

Biodiversity:The lake with rich biodiversity is India's largest fresh water lake ecosystem and ecologically one of the most important wetlands in India. The lake supports 200 species of birds (water and arboreal) including the most critically endangered bird of the world the 'Spoon-billed, Sand Piper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus* (Kolleru com-mittee report 2011). The lake is serving as a foraging ground for both resident and migratory birds. At present 6,000 Spot-billed Pelicans, 5,000 Painted Storks and 5,000 Asian open bills were estimated in Kolleru. The lake also supports 63 species of fishes and 23 species of medicinal plants.

Kolleru Lake plays a very important role of absorbing carbon to control the ill-effects of carbon emission and resultant global warming. Presently, the issue of emission of carbon into

the atmosphere is being debated hotly in the environmental circles across the world. This freshwater wetland acts as a carbon sink similar to any other thick forested area. It also acts as a filter agent, for filtering hazardous gases released due to various developmental activities.

From times immemorial the Kolleru Lake is famous for fish and birds. The richness of fish is mainly on account of birds only.

Lively hood: The livelihood of the Kolleru region is mainly pisciculture, agriculture and duck rearing for their eggs. Up to nearly three decades ago, the above said livelihood was entirely dependent on traditional methods without destroying the habitat and disturbing the lake's biodiversity. Agriculture up to + 5 contour is not viable as there is frequent flooding of the lake, resulting water logging up to +5 contour. Previously there were a number of duck-breeders, each owning a flock of several hundred ducks. These duck-farmers were traditionally steering their flocks for foraging in the marshy lands of Kolleru and in the surrounding paddy fields. During the night the duck-farmers were allowing their flocks to roost in the dry harvested paddy fields. The duck droppings were organically rich and conducive for the growth of plankton and they in turn facilitated in the large-scale growth of fish in the Kolleru Lake and also as manure. Thus the duck farming business was lucrative with countless lorry loads delicately packed duck-eggs being transported to the various markets in West Bengal. But, gradually

the traditional duck rearing practice in and around the Sanctuary has diminished because severely the addition of inorganic fertilizer to paddy fields and plankton for fish.

Aquaculture - Fish ponds:

Nearly from 1978 Aquaculture was started in Kolleru Lake by allotting each 50 acres to 130 Fishermen cooperative societies by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for artificial fish tanks. At the beginning the fish ponds were washed away during rainy season due to weaker bunds. Later the ponds were made with strong and higher bunds. The fishing societies are unable to maintain the fish ponds. They have taken the help of rich and finally given lease to them. Rich entered to help the societies and finally Encroachments started. Gradually most of the lake was encroached upon with illegal fish ponds and spread like mushroom, severely affecting the biodiversity of the lake and lake became very dangerous.

Sanctuary declaration: On 4th October 1999 Kolleru wild life sanctuary was declared with an area of 308 sq. km up to +5 contour levels leaving behind 600 sq. km. unprotected.

Demolition of fish tanks: The encroached upon fish tanks in the sanctuary were not cleared. Some environmentalists approached CEC to save the Kolleru from illegal fish ponds. With the recommendation of CEC during 2006 the Supreme Court ordered to demolish the illegal fish tanks in the Kolleru sanctuary. Subsequently the illegal fish tanks were demolished in the Kolleru sanctuary.

Zirayathi lands - Demand for downsizing the

Sanctuary: There is an area of 14861 acres of Zirayathi lands (Private, patta lands) in the sanctuary area. Government estimated about Rs 650 crores to be paid as compensation if these lands are to be taken over by Government but compensation could not be paid as this estimated amount is very high and the Government is not in position to pay such a huge amount.

Zirayathi land owners agitated for compensation. Zirayathi land owners and locals obstructed earmarking the boundary of the sanctuary by the Forest department and removed the pillars fixed by Government. Government allowed them agriculture in their Zirayathi lands by traditional method without using pesticides and chemical fertilizers and also fishing by traditional method for their lively hood. The Zirayathi land owners are claiming that the agriculture without pesticides and fertilizers is not giving adequate returns and not sufficient for their lively hood. Generally agriculture below 5th contour is not viable and economical due to regular flooding. The Zirayathi land owners and locals are agitating to down size Kolleru sanctuary from +5 to + 3 contours to meet their lively hood.

Dr Azeez Committee: During April 2010 Central Government formed a committee headed by Dr. Azeez of SACON to study regarding downsizing the Sanctuary from +5 contours to +3 contours. During the year 2011 in November Dr. P.A. Azeez committee had submitted its

report, not to down size the sanctuary highlighting disturbance to the lake's ecosystem if it were to be downsized and, opined to compensate zirayathi land owners either in cash or land.

Dr Ramana Sukumar Committee: The peoples' representatives are supporting the locals demanding the Government to down size the sanctuary for lively hood of locals. The A.P Government during the year 2014 passed resolution in the Legislative Assembly to down size the sanctuary from +5 contour to +3 contour to mitigate the problems of the locals stating that the payment of compensation is heavy burden to the Government and cannot pay the compensation. The resolution was sent to National Board for Wildlife. NBWL again appointed a committee headed by Dr Ramana Sukumar. During 2016 Ramana Sukumar in his report clearly mentioned not to down size the sanctuary but recommended to delete Zirayathi lands from Sanctuary limits and resurvey the lake.

The deletion of 14860 acres of Zirayathi lands will also give severe effect to the Sanctuary. Already 600 sq. km of the lake is under the possession of locals. Further downsizing or deletion of 14860 acres of Zirayathi lands from the sanctuary that is around 60 sq. km will severely destroy the lake/sanctuary. Even one acre also should not be deleted.

Threats: At present, the sanctuary is facing

several threats of which the major is total runoff water into lake is only 31% (Integrated management plan June 2008). After digging of PRMC (Polavaram Right Main Canal) might have been decreased further. Nearly for the last three decades the water flow to the sanctuary was drastically reduced slowly due to construction of dam on Thammileru at Nagireddygudem, and due to diversion of water of Budameleru into Krishna River at Velagaleru.

The encroachment of vast areas of the lake for developing illegal fish tanks is indeed another major threat. After the rainy season the flow of water to the sanctuary recedes and drains off quickly through Upputeru and in the process, most of the sanctuary gets dried up as early as February. The locals find the situation convenient for burning, and for digging illegal fish ponds in the sanctuary. As a matter of fact, *Phragmytis karka* and other weeds serve as suitable habitats for birds like rails, crakes, herons and a wide range of other fauna the existing illegal practice of burning of these plants has affected them rather severely.

Even though the *Phragmytis karka* and other water weeds such as *euchronia* are supporting for different species of birds, these weeds growth is abnormally high and severe eutrophication taking place and also affecting floating birds like ducks movement and their number.

In addition, raw sewage and industrial pollution from the nearby towns are being allowed to flow freely into the lake, which is irretrievably

damaging the lake's ecosystem. Similarly, some roads have been built without proper planning of culverts or bridges have affected the movement of water in the sanctuary.

Fish farming communities and politicians have joined hands and they are conniving to reduce the sanctuary from +5 contours (308 sq. km) to +3 contour. Loss is about 175 sq. km. of sanctuary.

Conservation strategy: As recommended in Dr Sukuma's report, efforts should be made to allow quantum of water in to the sanctuary. The state government is duty bound to protect the wetlands as per wetlands norms. Further, the State Government had enacted the "Andhra Pradesh Water, Land and Trees Act" (WALTA) to promote water conservation, to boost tree cover in the State and to regulate the exploitation of ground and surface water for protection and conservation of water resources. The State Government also issued a circular during "Neeru-Meeru" programme [Memo No24140/Assn 1(1)/2003/3 of 22 August 2003] to all district collectors to notify all lands with water-bodies and include such water bodies in the "Prohibitory Order Book" for protection and conservation.

The illegal fish tanks were demolished during the year 2006 to implement the orders of the Supreme Court. But the encroachers have built illegal fish tanks once again, in the zero-yathi lands agitating for their lively hood compelling the environmentalists to file fresh cases again

in the Supreme Court and High Court. To what extent Kolleru Wild Life Sanctuary can be protected and managed through filing number of PILs and obtaining court orders? The management of Sanctuary will become very difficult. There will be regular conflict between locals and forest department, and law and order problem for ever. Government feels that the compensation (estimated Rs. 650 crores in 2006 now it might have increased to more than double) to Zirayathi land owners is a burden. Yet it may not be too much as compared to save the ecologically/Internationally most important and viable lake when compared to the present expenditure of the government towards the various incentives. In any case, the financial burden can be shared by the State and Central governments.

It is suggested that efforts have to be made to control the water-spread of the Sanctuary up to +5 contours at least for a period of 10 months with marshlands, with a regulator on the Upputeru outlet, so as to ensure the good size growth and availability of fish for longer periods. During the period of dry up lake bed around the end of March/April is also most beneficial to fishermen and birds. Such an effort on the part of the authorities will not only sustain the livelihood of local communities, but also check the current practice of burning of the aquatic weeds and the digging of illegal fish tanks in the sanctuary, abundant fish production and more number of birds residing in the lake for a long

time. More potential for Eco tourism in controlled manner just like Bharathpur. This will give multiple benefits.

Duck farming also to be encouraged as this activity will not disturb birds and in fact helps agriculturists, as they get good organic manure for their fields. This activity also increases plankton for fish which will give good income to duck farmers' and agriculturists.

The conservation efforts made by the Forest Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh by providing artificial nesting stands for breeding purpose has brought back the Pelicans to great extent. Now the pelicans and painted storks together are about 11,000 and the excreta droppings helps for growth of the fish. The artificial stands to be reduced step by step increasing the tree cover mainly *Prosopis* which is excellently suitable for breeding and roosting. At Uppalapadu *Prosopis* is supporting thousands of birds throughout the year. From 1989 to till date (28 years) only once (around the year 2002) 50% of the *prosopis* suddenly died. The exact reason is not known. This may also be studied.

There is severe pressure and persistent agitations from the locals who are concerned about their livelihood. Kolleru Lake which has enormous tourism potential is capable of addressing the livelihood concerns of the local community. Ecotourism can be developed with adequate measures to maintain the water levels and marshlands that attract large

population of waterfowl. In fact, the World Migratory Bird Day was celebrated during 2014 in association with tourism department. The advantages of partnership between ecotourism and conservation need to be further highlighted to convince the local bodies. The very good example is of Bharathpur Keoladev Ghana National Park. There at Bharathpur, most of the families are dependent on the sanctuary, either directly or indirectly for their sustenance. In addition, some of the families of Agra and Jaipur cities have also migrated to Bharatpur and earning their lively hood through the income generated from tourists visiting Bharathpur Sanctuary. At least a small portion of Sanctuary area may be used for tourism on lines similar to Bharathpur National Park. Manglajodi of ChilakaLake is an excellent example of participation of community in Eco tourism. Efforts should be made to plant lofty trees such as coconut and mango trees etc., in the island villages in order to restore green cover and provide the facelift. The local communities and Zirayathi land owners should be roped in for managing and regulating the tourism in all aspects viz., establishing restaurants, cottages, hotels, boat operations, and transport such as taxis, tourist buses, and guides etc., which will sustain the livelihood and generate adequate income to the locals. The tourism can be regulated by the eco-development committees and local governing bodies under the

supervision of the forest department. Proper micro plans should be drawn for development of tourism and strategy for sharing of the revenue from the tourism between the stakeholders. Steps are to be taken to see that the Eco tourism should be in the controlled manner without disturbing the habitat and wild life.

In this context, it must be noted that a few years ago the Keoladev Ghana National Park faced existential crisis due to acute shortage of water. This was because the inlet water meant for the sanctuary was diverted for irrigation. Even during such acute calamitous circumstances the Keoladev was not allowed to die.

Therefore, the proposal to downsize the Sanctuary from +5 contours to +3 contours is shortsighted and ecologically unsound. The best option in the given circumstances is to provide reasonable compensation to Zirayathi land owners and to regulate the water in the sanctuary at least for 10 months up to 5th contour. Further, steps need to be taken to develop eco-tourism, on the lines similar to Bharathpur Sanctuary/Manglajodi/Uppalapadu. Such an endeavour will not only address the livelihood concerns of the locals, but also ensures the long-time survival of the Kolleru Wildlife Sanctuary.

(The author was former Honorary Wild life Warden of Guntur district.)

BOOK REVIEW

Name of the Book: Figs of Eastern Ghats, India

Names of the Authors: Dr. J.V. Sudhakar

Mr. N. Chandra Mohan Reddy, IFS

Dr. G.V.S. Murthy

Publisher: Published with the financial support by the National Bio Diversity Authority, Chennai

I feel privileged to write review of the book by three great stalwarts who took enormous pains to collect data from different sources and study material by visiting several places in Eastern Ghats covering five states viz., Odisha, Chattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Tamil Nadu, over a long period. The authors: Dr. J.V. Sudhakar, is a researcher in the Botanical Survey of India; Mr. N. Chandra Mohan Reddy, is an officer of the Indian Forest Service and is known to the people for his monumental work on gardening and landscaping. He is also an esteemed friend of the reviewer; Dr. G.V.S. Murthy is a scientist in the Botanical Survey of India. The book is a product of untiring effort of the trio. The authors have received appreciation from a person no less than Prof. M.S. Swaminathan for their 'useful contribution'.

In the words of Prof. Swaminathan, "The book describes the habit, morphology, economic and religious importance, medicinal importance, propagation techniques, pollinators, and the pollination mechanism in both monoecious and dioecious fig species".

The book is divided into seven chapters including among others, a chapter each on wild figs, cultivated figs, and monumental figs. A Glossary, Abbreviations, and Index to scientific

names added at the end of the book are very useful to the reader.

The book containing about 150 pages printed on glossy paper, with many illustrations and beautiful pictures and scientific data makes it very attractive and educative to students interested in the study of figs.

Etymology of some of the species is interesting. *F. anamalayana* refers to the Anamali Hills in Tamil Nadu. *F. arnottiana* is named after Arnol W. Arnott, a Scottish botanist. Benjamin Franklin, an American statesman and philosopher is honoured by naming *F. benjamina*. *F. dalhousiae* is probably the name after Lord Dalhousie who was Governor General of British India. *Ficus krishnae* is after Lord Krishna since the base of the leaf has a cup like structure which is considered 'Butter Cup' of Krishna. There are many more interesting features.

At page 17, there is a general description of economic importance of fig trees. In chapter 5, there is an individual description of 27 wild Fig species touching upon scientific name, etymology, leaves, flowering and fruiting etc. Chapter 6 similarly contains description of 10 cultivated figs. On pages 128 to 133, there are beautiful colour pictures of popular cultivars used for gardening and landscaping. Chapter 7 contains description of monumental figs of Thimmamma Marrimanu of near Kadiri (AP), Pillala Marri at Mahbunagar (Telangana), A great Banyan tree of Howrah (West Bengal). After reading the book even cursorily, one would be left with a feeling – Is there is anything left of FIGS?

K.B.R.

NEWS AND NOTES

From Cape Town to Kabul: taps run dry:

Drought-stricken Cape Town could run out of water as soon as April, but South Africa is not alone in its struggle as ever more cities across the world battle acute water shortages. Water scarcity already affects more than 40 percent of the world's population and is expected to rise due to global warming, with one in four people projected to face chronic or recurring shortages by 2050, according to the United Nations. Already hosting more than half the world's people, cities are at the forefront of the problem, as population growth increases pressure on reserves, which are already stretched by too little rain and too much waste.

Following are some of the crisis cities:

SAO PAULO: - The reservoir supplying Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest city and a metropolitan region of 20 million people, nearly dried up in 2015, as the country faced its worst drought in 80 years, depriving many residents of water for 12 hours a day.

The city was criticized by U.N. experts for losing 31 percent of its treated water to leaks and theft, compared to an average of 16 percent in the United States.

LIMA: - Rain in the Peruvian capital is almost non-existent, with average annual precipitation of 7 millimeters.

Water is expected to become scarcer still as global warming thaws Andean glaciers, reducing flows as the ice disappears. The city has been working to improve watersheds in the Andes Mountains, while residents in hillside shantytowns overlooking the city have been

using nets to condense thick fog from the Pacific Ocean into drainage pipes.

AMMAN: - Amman, the capital city of Jordan, has no nearby source of water and regularly experiences drought, while its lower-lying parts are inundated when it rains heavily.

The city recycles the vast majority of its waste water and uses it for irrigation but a refugee influx from neighboring Syria has put additional pressure on reserves countrywide.

The government is moving ahead with new pipelines for groundwater and projects to desalinate water from the Red Sea.

MEXICO CITY: - Despite the heavy downpours that come each rainy season, Mexico City, a mega-city of 21.3 million people, depends on depleting aquifers and has long struggled with providing enough water to its inhabitants.

Built on what was once a lake, it is also prone to flooding.

Having over-pumped local supplies so much that land is sinking, the city is working to redesign its water system, which sources a third of its supplies from nearby river basins and valleys.

MELBOURNE: - The Australian city suffered the so-called 'Millennium drought' between 1997 and 2009. It was one of the worst dry spells on record, affecting other major cities such as Perth, Adelaide and Sydney. Melbourne has since slashed per capita water use by half and installed desalination and recycling plants.

KABUL: - Originally planned to support about 1 million people, the Afghan capital is now home to more than 4.6 million, according to

U.S. government estimates.

Several unseasonably dry winters, along with the sprawling population, have strained supplies. Those who can afford to have dug unregulated wells to tap a falling water table. Thomson Reuters Foundation

Scientists solve mystery of when flowers originated: They date it to sometime between 149 and 256 million years ago.

A team of scientists from Britain and China has claimed to have solved what Charles Darwin called the "abominable mystery" of when flowers originated.

Flowering plants likely originated between 149 and 256 million years ago, said the study published in the journal *New Phytologist*.

The study shows that flowering plants are neither as old as suggested by previous molecular studies, nor as young as a literal interpretation of their fossil record.

"The discrepancy between estimates of flowering plant evolution from molecular data and fossil records has caused much debate. Even Darwin described the origin of this group as an 'abominable mystery,'" explained lead author Jose Barba-Montoya from University College London.

"To uncover the key to solving the mystery of when flowers originated, we carefully analyzed the genetic make-up of flowering plants, and the rate at which mutations accumulate in their genomes," he explained.

Through the lens of the fossil record, flowering plants appear to have diversified suddenly, precipitating a Cretaceous Terrestrial Revolution in which pollinators, herbivores and predators

underwent explosive co-evolution.

Molecular-clock dating studies, however, have suggested a much older origin for flowering plants, implying a cryptic evolution of flowers that is not documented in the fossil record.

"In large part, the discrepancy between these two approaches is an artefact of false precision on both paleontological and molecular evolutionary timescales," said Professor Philip Donoghue from the University of Bristol in England.

The new findings underline the power of using complementary studies based on molecular data and the fossil record, along with different approaches to infer evolutionary timescales to establish a deeper understanding of evolutionary dynamics many millions of years ago.

The discrepancy between estimates of flowering plant evolution from molecular data and fossil records has caused much debate. Even Darwin described the origin of this group as an 'abominable mystery'

Animals can count too: The acoustic one-upfrogship is energetically draining and risks attracting predators like bats. Yet the male frogs have no choice but to keep count of the competition, for the simple reason that female túngaras are doing the same: listening, counting and ultimately mating with the male of maximum chunks. Behind the frog's surprisingly sophisticated number sense, scientists have found, are specialized cells located in the amphibian midbrain that tally up sound signals and the intervals between them.

The story of the frog's neuro-abacus is just one

example of nature's vast, ancient and versatile number sense, a talent explored in detail in a recent themed issue of the journal *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*, edited by Brian Butterworth, a cognitive neuroscientist at University College London, C. Randy Gallistel of Rutgers University and Giorgio Vallortigara of the University of Trento in Italy.

Scientists have found that animals across the evolutionary spectrum have a keen sense of quantity, able to distinguish not just bigger from smaller or more from less, but two from four, four from 10, 40 from 60.

Small fish benefit from living in schools and the more numerous the group the statistically better a fish's odds of escaping predation. As a result, many shoaling fish are excellent appraisers of relative head counts. Guppies, for example, have a so-called contrast ratio of 0.8, which means they can distinguish at a glance between four guppies and five, or eight guppies and 10, and if given the chance will swim toward the slightly fishier crowd.

Three-spined sticklebacks are more discriminating still: with a contrast ratio of .86, they're able to tell six fellow fish from seven, or 18 from 21 - a comparative power that many birds, mammals and even humans might find hard to beat.

Chimpanzees are social scorekeepers, episodic warriors and number ninjas, too. They can be taught to associate groups of objects with corresponding Arabic numerals up to the number 9 and sometimes beyond — three squares on a computer screen with the number 3, five squares with 5, and so on. They can put those numerals in order.

Researchers have determined that number words for small quantities - less than five - are strikingly similar across virtually every language group studied, and the words are among the most stable, unchanging utterances in any lexicon.

"It's not out of the question that you could have been wandering around 15,000 years ago and encountered a few of the last remaining Neanderthals, pointed to yourself and said, 'one,' and pointed to them and said, 'three,' and those words, in an odd, coarse way, would have been understood." That continuity, Pagel added, "Should astonish us."

Climate change speeding up sea level rise,

satellites show: - Washington, Feb 13 (IANS) Climate change has accelerated sea level rise and the rate at which it is rising is increasing every year, a study citing satellite data has revealed. Researchers, led by the University of Colorado-Boulder professor of aerospace engineering sciences Steve Nerem, used the data dating back to 1993 to observe the levels of the world's oceans, reports CNN.

Using satellite data rather than tide-gauge data that is normally used to measure sea levels allows for more precise estimates of global sea level, since it provides measurements of the open ocean.

The team observed a total rise in the ocean of 7 cm in 25 years of data, which aligns with the generally accepted current rate of sea level rise of about 3 mm per year, according to a study released on Monday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

But that rate was not constant.

Continuous emissions of greenhouse gases are warming the Earth's atmosphere and oceans and melting its ice, causing the rate of sea level rise to increase, CNN reported.

"This acceleration, driven mainly by accelerated melting in Greenland and Antarctica, has the potential to double the total sea level rise by 2100 as compared to projections that assume a constant rate, to more than 60 cm instead of about 30," said Nerem.

Sea level rise of 65 cm would cause significant problems for coastal cities around the world. Extreme water levels, such as high tides and surges from strong storms, would be made exponentially worse.

Hope to cut air pollution in 100 cities by 50% in next 5 years: Environment minister: -

The environment ministry hopes to bring down air pollution in around 100 non-attainment cities by 50 per cent in the next five years under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), Union minister Harsh Vardhan said today. Non-attainment cities are those considered to have air quality worse than the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

To tackle the challenges posed by climate change, the ministry has also drawn up an initiative, under which it plans to plant 1,000 crore saplings from 2021 to 2030.

"We will strengthen the National Clean Air Programme in around 100 non-attainment cities where parameters (air quality) are not right and requires attention." In the coming three years, we hope that through this, we will bring down pollution in these cities by 35 per cent and in the next five years by 50 per cent," Vardhan told reporters.

The programme will include expanding monitoring network, conducting air pollution health impact studies, setting up of air information systems, certification of monitoring institutes, air quality forecasting systems, awareness and capacity building drives, among others.

It will also include networking of technical institutions who specialize in this area, carrying out source apportionment studies, support for strict implementation of identified actions for abatement of air pollution from all sources in furtherance of management plans and increase international cooperation, among others.

The NCAP focuses on a collaborative and participatory approach comprising all sources of pollution and coordination between relevant central ministries, state governments, local bodies and other stakeholders.

For tackling climate change, making the rivers clean and perennial, and enriching forests in the river basins, River Basin Catchment Area Treatment Plan will be taken up.

Vardhan said clean air programme has been taken up in Delhi and the ministry is trying to make it a model.

Experiences gained from it will be replicated yearlong in Delhi as well as in other cities of the country, the minister said.

Informing the reporters that an initiative has been planned to tackle the challenges posed by climate change, he said, "The plan envisages planting 1,000 crore saplings over a period of 10 years, from 2021 to 2030."

"The plantation will be carried out in different parts of the country under programmes like

CAMPA, Green India Mission (GIM), National Afforestation Programme, as well as plantation along highways and railway tracks,"Vardhan said. On the budgetary allocation for the ministry this time, Harsh Vardhan said for a restructured National Bamboo Mission, an outlay of Rs 1,290 crore has been made to promote the bamboo sector in a "holistic" manner.

Recently, the government has removed bamboo grown outside forest areas, from the definition of trees.

Indian Gaur rescued from open well in Telangana's Warangal:

-A three-year-old male gaur, also known as Indian Bison (*Bos gaurus*), which fell into an open well at Penchikalpet village of Atmakurmandal in Warangal Rural district, was rescued by Forest department officials after about a three-hour struggle. The wild animal has been shifted to the Nehru Zoological Park in Hyderabad for treatment on Friday. Forest officials used cranes to rescue the wild animal after tranquilizing it.

The gaur, along with another one, was roaming in the area for the last three days. One Gurrupu Laxminarsu (45) was injured after one gaur attacked him while he was working in his farmland on Wednesday at Manugonda village in Geesugonda mandal. Following this, two teams were formed by the Forest department to trace the gaurs that entered human

habitations. But they could trace the animals only by Thursday evening. It was during the search that they received information from Penchikalpet village that a toddy tapper had sustained a hand fracture after being attacked by a gaur and that the gaur later fell into an open well.

Following this, District Forest Officer (DFO) K Purushotam alerted higher ups and set up a rescue teams under the guidance of Dr. Hakeem of the Nehru Zoological Park, and Dr. Praveen, Kakatiya Zoo Park. The teams successfully managed to retrieve the animal from the well and administered first-aid as it had suffered a severe injury on its lower jaw.

"We have shifted the gaur to NZP, Hyderabad, for treatment. After recuperation, the animal may be brought to Kakatiya Zoo in Warangal or will be released in the forest," DFO Purushotam told.

While an adult male is dark black and female is in brown in colour, the gaur generally weighs about 1 tonne to 1.5 tonne. "This injured gaur weighs around 600 kg," the DFO added.

The Gaur has been classified vulnerable with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) redlisting the animal. It is also a protected species under the Wildlife protection Act, 1972. This gaur is believed to be from the Eturnagaram wildlife sanctuary.

Silence is the best answer to someone who doesn't value your voice.

LEGAL NOTES

By

D. Balappa vs. DFO, Hyderabad and another

A case of poaching was detected by the vigilant staff of Hyderabad Division on 14-03-2009. The Dy.RO, Dharoor section in Vikarabad Range, on detection of the crime of killing a Cheetal, seized the carcass as well as the tractor and trailer in which carcass of Cheetal was being transported. He issued Preliminary Offence Report No. 15-21/86. It is alleged that the Cheetal was killed in Reserve Forest.

The owner of the tractor and trailer approached the court of Judicial First Class Magistrate at Vikarabad with a request to release the vehicles. The Magistrate declined to pass any order for release of the vehicle. He then approached the DFO, Hyderabad and requested to release the vehicle. The DFO rejected the application and passed orders on 04-07-2009.

Aggrieved by the order of the DFO, the owner of the tractor filed WP No. 15911/2009 in the Hon'ble of High Court of Andhra Pradesh. It was contended that he was not aware of the use of the tractor and trailer for transporting a killed wild animal. He requested the court to release the tractor and trailer and offered to provide adequate security. While approaching the High Court in the Writ Petition, Balappa cited a precedent of High Court order in WP No. 10782/2009 in which Justice G. Rohini first ordered on 24-03-2009 directing the release of the tractor and trailer but subsequently vacated the order on 08-04-2009. The owner of the tractor in the writ petition tried to mislead the court by quoting an order of the court which was not true. Writ Petition No. 15911/2009 was heard by the Hon'ble Justice L. Narasimha Reddy and the order of the court is reproduced below which

expresses the court's concern for Environment, Forest and Wildlife:

"The offences of illicit felling of trees and killing of wild animals are on the rise. Naturally this is having its own effect upon the environment and the wild life. The greed of human beings is growing in geometrical proportions.

The record placed before this Court discloses that a spotted deer was killed and it was being transported in the trolley, owned by the petitioner. The respondents must be complimented for the manner in which, they dealt with the matter. Not only the relevant material, but also the photographs, depicting the offence, is filed before this Court.

Notwithstanding the allegations against the petitioner, had there been a provision for release of the vehicle, pending investigation, or trial into the matter, this Court would certainly have considered it. Obviously on account of the emphasis on protection of wild life, Parliament did not think it fit to incorporate any provision for release of the vehicles and vessels. On the other hand, Section 39 of the Act directs that, the vehicles and vessels that are used against the wild life shall become the property of the Government.

The emphasis appears to be, to prevent the vehicle, from being used in similar type of offences.

Hence, the writ petition is dismissed."

The Hon'ble Court gave a direction to the Dy. RO to conclude his proceedings within a period of three months.

Source: ACF (Law) at Aranya Bhavan, Hyderabad

K.B.R.

OBITUARY

N. Manohar Rao

1.5.1942 - 22.2.2018



With profound grief we record the demise of one of our best friend Sri Nemurugommula Manohar Rao on 22nd February, 2018 at his residence, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad due to a massive heart attack. He was 75.

Sri Manohar Rao was born in an agricultural family to Sri N. Anantha Rao and Smt. Narsamma at Wadde Kothapally village, Warangal District. He was the third among the four sons and two daughters born of his parents. His elder brother the late Sri Yethiraja Rao was a minister in the A.P Cabinet. He had his early education at Little Flower High school, Hyderabad and St. George School at Warangal; and graduation from Science College at Warangal. He was a good cricket player and a known fast bowler.

He was selected by Government of A.P. for appointment as Forest Range Officer and was deputed to Southern Forest Rangers College at Coimbatore for training in Forestry. He successfully completed the Rangers course during the 1964-66. After passing out from the Forest College, Mr. Rao worked as Forest Range Officer in Warangal and Kareemnagar districts. He was promoted to the State Forest Service as Assistant Conservator of Forests in 1977 and eventually as Deputy Conservator of Forests before retirement. He retired on superannuation in May 2000. Sri Manohar Rao was married to Smt. Sarala Devi, daughter of Sri. P. Gopal Rao, Deputy Commissioner excise (Rtd.). Smt. Sarala predeceased him. The couple had 3 daughters, Rajani, Anitha and Lakshmi; and a son Ananth Rao, settled in U.S.A. By God's grace all his daughters and son are married well settled.

Sri Rao was friendly with colleagues and never got perturbed even in difficult moments. He was a good host, where-ever he worked and used to invite his colleagues and friends for a get-together. His batch-mates affectionately called him *DORA* and he stood up to it with dignity and decorum. Mr. Rao was very much interested in Social Forestry works. He did Diploma course in Social Forestry at Dehra Dun. He worked as Social Forestry DFO at Sangareddy and as Director, Urban Forestry in Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad. During his tenure in Municipal Corporation, massive tree planting programme was taken up and saplings of tree species were planted in and around Hyderabad city. Government of A.P. sent Mr. Rao to Oxford University (U.K.) for a training programme. He worked as Deputy Conservator, K.B.R. National Park before retirement. He planted native species by replacing the exotics like Eucalyptus etc., in the park. During his tenure in the KBR National Park there were numerous writ petitions in the High Court claiming right over the land with some pretext or the other. He resisted them all with vigour, dedication and perseverance. Thanks to his vision, today K.B.R. Park represents the flora typical of Deccan plateau and serves as a lung space in the middle of city. Many morning walkers love to spend some in the Park.

Mr. Rao is survived by three daughters, a son and 6 grand children (4 grandsons and 2 grand daughters). He is fondly remembered by relatives, friends and Colleagues.

MAY GOD BLESS HIS NOBLE SOUL TO REST IN PEACE!

M.P.R.

OBITUARY

Sri A. Rama Rao

14.02.1955-29.01.2018



Sri Anantatmakula Rama Rao was born on 14.02.1955 at Gokavaram village and Mandal of East Godavari District to Sri late A. Narasinga Rao and has done his graduation and post-graduation from Andhra University, Visakhapatnam. He was selected by Government of Andhra Pradesh for appointment as Forest Range Officer in 1976 emergency batch and underwent training at APSOF, Yellandu from 1976 October to March, 1977. He worked as Forest Range Officer in Pines Research and was deputed for training to Southern Forest Ranger's College at Coimbatore in 1978-80 batch. After completion of training Sri Rama

Rao worked as Forest Range Officer and was promoted as Asst. Conservator of Forests in 1997. He retired as Divisional Forest Officer, Paderu on 28th February, 2013 in Paderu Division. Sri A. Rama Rao, Divisional Forest Officer (Retd.) was reappointed as Instructor in Forest Academy Rajamahendravaram. He was on tour along with trainees to Vishakhapatnam. He reached Vishakhapatnam, on 28-02-2018, settled the trainees and went to his daughter's house. His daughter and son in law are working as doctors. He stayed in his daughter's house. Early in the morning at 3 A.M. he suffered massive heart attack and died. His daughter and son in law who are doctors also could not save his life. .

He was married to Smt. RadhaKumari (B.A). They have two daughters Dr A. Sameera, who currently working as Asst. Professor in N.R.I medical college, Sarigivalasa, Vizag in Department of Radio diagnosis. Smt. A. Sudheera who is working as Asst. Consultant in T.C.S, Pune, by God's Grace both of them are married and well settled.

Sri Rama Rao was hard working, sincere and dedicated officer. His one and only principle was work is worship, love what you do and do what you love. He was a role model for entire department. He was a guide and guardian of his family. He served as faculty member in A.P. State Forest Academy, Rajamahendravaram from 02-01-2017 till his last breath on 29th January, 2018. He is survived by his wife, two daughters' and 3 grand-children. We will always carry his memory in our hearts.

May his noble Soul, rest in peace.

Dr. A. Sameera

S.V. Ramana

Printed and published by Qamar Mohd. Khan on behalf of Association of Retired Forest Officers , Printed at Venu Graphics D.No.2-1-392/1/6, Fever Hospital Signal, Nallakunta, Hyderabad-500044 and published from Room no. 514, 5th Floor, Aranya Bhavan, Hyderabad-500004. Editor : Qamar Mohd. Khan.

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Date of Publication: 26-02-2018 Total pages 56 Date of Dispatch : 4th or 5th of every month