

CONSTANT FEAR

Alone in the wild, elderly trio await relocation

RAVI KELANGADI

KALASA (C'MAGALUR DIST), DHNS

In the dense Western Ghats forests, stand three dilapidated houses, each with just one inmate, including two elderly women. Fearing wild animal attacks, the doors of these houses are locked by 6 pm and only opened the following day.

This is the plight of the three who have been waiting for years to be relocated from the Kunnihalla area, three kilometres from Kudremukh under the Kudremukh National Park area.

The authorities of the National Park have prepared a relocation package for these 'families', but due to technical



Shyamaladevi, who is waiting to be relocated, at her house in Kudremukh.

reasons, they have not yet received the package. Despite heavy rainfall in the area, two elderly women and a man in his 50's continue to live in the houses that are on the verge of collapse.

Shyamaladevi, aged around 65 years, has been living in the area for over four

decades and has been appealing to the local officials including the Chikkamagaluru deputy commissioner, tahsildar and DCF Kudremukh Wildlife Division for the relocation package.

However, her pleas have gone in vain for the past several years. The rehabilitation package for Kudremukh National Park settlers was announced in 2003-04.

"Our three houses were supposed to receive a package of Rs 10 lakh a long time ago. But, for years, our old-age pension and whatever help we get from others have all been spent on making trips to government offices, with no results," Shyamaladevi said.

► **Relocation, Page 5**

Aged trio alone in the wild, await relocation

Relocation, from Page 1

"The Karkala DCF informed us that we need to get e-swathu documentation to receive compensation for our houses. We have to travel to Mudigere town panchayat which is around 80 km away to get records of our houses in the Kudremukh notified area. We are unable to get it done," Shyamaladevi added.

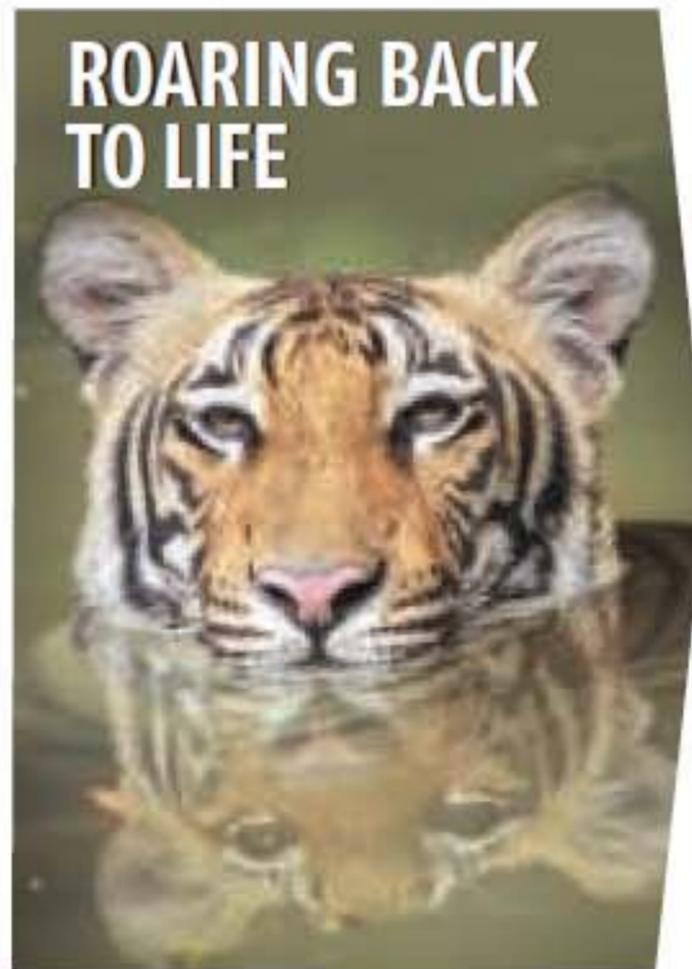
E-Swathu is a government scheme to establish the ownership details of properties in rural areas.

"The three houses are on the verge of collapse. Due to the rain, the solar-powered lights are not functional. We are scared to open the doors after 6 pm as packs of wild dogs and leopards prowl near our houses," said Nagratamma, aged over 60, a resident of another house.

"We have to travel to Kalasa, 25 km away, to get any medical aid. We have no hope of surviving this year in the stormy weather," Nagratamma added.

"The relocation package process for these three families is in progress. Without e-swathu documents, the process has been delayed. Senior officials are looking into the issue," said RFO Kudremukh wildlife division Jyoti Menasinakai.

Big cat mortality drops 29% so far in 2024



Tiger population

2006	1,411	<div style="width: 20%;"></div>
2010	1,706	<div style="width: 25%;"></div>
2014	2,226	<div style="width: 35%;"></div>
2018	2,967	<div style="width: 45%;"></div>
2022	3,682	<div style="width: 55%;"></div>

Tiger mortality trend



*As on July 29; Source: NTCA

NITIN KUMAR

New Delhi, 29 July

In a positive trend, tiger deaths in India saw a 29 per cent decline so far this year, with 81 fatalities of the wild cats reported, compared to 114 registered during the corresponding period last year.

A total of 178 tiger deaths were reported in 2023, the highest number of fatalities in a decade, according to mortality data by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). Additionally, the mortality rate among tiger cubs has also seen a decline, with 8 cub deaths reported this year from January 1 to July 29, down from 13 during the same period in 2023.

According to the 5th cycle of the All India Tiger Estimation 2022 summary report, India is now home to more than 70 per cent of the world's wild tiger population, with 3,682 big cats. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had on Saturday exhorted the public to protect forest and wildlife. The International Tiger Day, which falls on 29 July, serves as a platform to raise awareness about the challenges faced by tigers and the efforts being made to safeguard their future.

Project Tiger

The initiative, Project Tiger, was aimed at increasing the tiger population, which was on the brink of extinction in the 1970s. There were just 1,411 tigers in India in 1972.

According to estimates, India had 40,000 tigers in the wild at the end of the 19th century. Their numbers declined drastically in the 20th century. Alarmed by this, the Indian Board for Wild Life in 1969 recommended a total ban on the export of all wild cat skins, including those of tigers. In the same year, the International Union for Conservation of Nature included tiger in its "Red Data Book" as an endangered species.

In 1973, the government launched Project Tiger at the Corbett Tiger Reserve. The initiative completed 50 years in 2023 for which a commemorative event was held in which Prime Minister Modi launched the 'Amrit Kaal Ka Vision For Tiger Conservation'.

Hindustan Times

New Delhi, 30 July 2024

Cairn drilling plan may affect wildlife

Jayashree Nandi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: An approval by the Union environment ministry for exploratory oil and gas drilling in parts of Assam may put the endangered hoolock gibbon at further risk. Cairn India, the oil and gas unit of the Anil Agarwal-promoted Vedanta Ltd wants to use 4.4998 hectare of reserved forest land for oil and gas exploration drilling in the notified eco-sensitive zone of the Hoolongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary, official documents show. While the forest advisory com-

mittee (FAC) of the ministry has deferred its decision, according to minutes of its meeting dated July 4, the project has the blessings of both the state government and the regional office of the environment ministry.

And while the area may seem small, experts cite that the gibbon is a canopy dweller, and that any break, however small, in the existing canopy in its habitat could be a risk.

The corporate communications team of Cairn India did not respond to HT's queries on how the impact on hoolock gibbons will be mitigated.

Cairn India's drilling plan may risk wildlife in Assam

Jayashree Nandi

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The FAC observed that comments from the principal chief conservator of forests (wildlife) or the chief wildlife warden from a conservation point of view along with a wildlife conservation plan may be obtained by the state government on Cairn India's proposal.

The presence of hoolock gibbons, elephants and leopards has been reported in the area proposed for diversion. The divisional forest officer, Jorhat, has mentioned in Part-II of the form that "elephants, hoolock



Oil and gas drilling plan may risk wildlife in Hoollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary. HT PHOTO

gibbons, leopards, etc are present in the area but added that the project is in a relatively small area and no major construction is anticipated. "Hence the impact will be minimal and, if necessary, a wildlife management and mitigation plan shall be prepared and all precautions shall be taken to cause minimal disturbance to wildlife and to mitigate man-animal conflict," he added.

The regional office of the Union environment ministry has approved the project with certain conditions — strict compliance of the SOP (standard operating procedure)/recommendations of the nineteenth report of the standing committee on petroleum and natural gas (safety and security of oil installations of public sector oil companies with specific reference to the Baghjan blow-out incident). It also asked for special measures to prevent landslide/erosion.

It also recommended that the consent of the National Board of Wildlife must be obtained prior

to the final approval as the proposed area is located in the eco-sensitive zone of the sanctuary.

The gas blow-out in Oil India Limited's Baghjan oilfield in Assam in May 2020 lasted several months and led to extensive damage to local ecology. The Baghjan well is located near the Dibru Saikhowa National Park, the Maguri-Motapung wetlands, and the forest villages of Barekuri, which are home to endangered hoolock gibbons and Gangetic dolphins.

The corporate communications team of Cairn India did not respond to HT's queries on how the impact on hoolock gibbons will be mitigated.

"The hoolock gibbon is a canopy dweller. Their movement is restricted if their habitat is fragmented. Canopy-based animals just cannot move if any project, be it oil and gas exploration or mining, logging, encroachments, other development projects, agriculture fragments even a small part of the habitat," said Dilip Chetry, a senior primatologist who has specialised in the species.

"Hoolock gibbons are very friendly. They are not aggressive and hence there is no conflict with human beings. Gibbons are an indicator for other species. Wherever there are gibbons, there are other primates, schedule 1 species, all other species. So hoolock gibbons are a flagship species. They form close-knit families and are monogamous," Chetry added.

The hoolock gibbon is "endangered" according to the International Union for Conser-

vation of Nature. Its total population in northeastern India is now estimated to be over 12,000, with around 2,000 in Assam alone.

Meanwhile, in relief to wildlife in the Dibru Saikhowa National Park, FAC has rejected extended reach drilling in the park.

Oil India Ltd had applied for a forest clearance for non-forestry use of 0.069ha of forest land for extended reach drilling under the Dibru Saikhowa National Park from Baghjan Petroleum Mining Lease (PML) in the Tinsukia wildlife division.

According to Oil India, the proposed land for the seven extended reach drilling locations is beneath the target depth of 3,900-4,000 metres.

"Therefore, the impact upon the land may not be visible. If high density blasting is done on the location then the impact may be visible over the surface," it said.

After detailed discussions and deliberations with the director general of forests (central), regional office, Shillong, and state government officials, the committee decided to recommend the rejection of the proposal for non-forestry use of 0.069ha of Dibru Saikhowa National Park area for extended reach drilling in the Tinsukia wildlife division in accordance with a Supreme Court order dated 04.08.2006 and reiterated vide an order on 26.04.2023. The order directed that mining within the national park and wildlife sanctuary shall not be permissible.

Casanova of Kuno is father of 7 cubs

**RABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC**
BHOPAL, JULY 29

Namibian cheetah Pavan, who was called Oban in Namibia, has established himself as the most prolific father at Kuno National Park (KNP) in Madhya Pradesh by fathering seven cubs with two female cheetahs.

The six-year-old Pavan fathered three cubs with female cheetah Aasha, born on January 3, 2024, and another four cubs with Jwala, born on January 22 this year. His



offspring now make up half of the cheetah cub population in the park.

■ **Page 7: Pavan's wild nature highly attractive**

PAVAN'S WILD NATURE HIGHLY ATTRACTIVE

FROM PAGE 1

Pavan has earned the nickname 'Casanova of Kuno' from forest officials due to his charm and the comfort he provides female cheetahs. "Pavan's youth, robust build, and wild nature make him highly attractive to female cheetahs," said Uttam Kumar Sharma, KNP's field director.

Weighing around 60 kg, Pavan has demonstrated resilience, navigating through the harsh summers of Kuno while other cheetahs were sheltered in Soft Release Bomas (SRBs). He has also made headlines for his adventurous spirit, including a notable incident where he crossed the Chambal River into Rajasthan before being brought back to Kuno.

Pavan's history includes being born in March 2018 at Erindi Private Game Reserve in Namibia as a second-generation wild-born cub. He is renowned for his hunting skills, territorial instincts, and independent nature.

In contrast, Jwala's first litter, fathered by the now-deceased male cheetah Freddie, saw only one cub survive. Similarly, South African female cheetah Gamini gave birth to six cubs fathered by Pavan, with a portion of the cubs surviving.

Currently, the park hosts 27 cheetahs, including seven females, six males, and 14 cubs.

Chhatbir Zoo makes people aware about tiger conservation

TOI

TIMES NEWS NETWORK



Chhatbir Zoo has five tigers – three females and two males

Int'l Tiger Day

Field director, Chhatbir Zoo, Neeraj Kumar said International Tiger Day first started in 2010 during the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia. The summit brought together govts from tiger-range countries, conservation organisations, and experts to discuss measures to halt the alarming decline in tiger numbers.

loss, poaching, and human-wildlife conflict. He also emphasised the importance of community involvement in conservation efforts and shared various strategies implemented to protect tigers.

Mohali: Mahendra Chaudhary Zoological Park, popularly known as Chhatbir Zoo, on Monday organised various events to mark International Tiger Day. Field director, Chhatbir Zoo, Neeraj Kumar said the aim was to educate people about tiger conservation.

Kumar said since the zoo remains closed for visitors on Monday, they organised an online session – Tiger Talk – to make people aware about the problems being faced by this “magnificent cat”.

Chhatbir Zoo has a total of five tigers – two males and three females. Out of these, Diya (12) and Arjun (5) were born at the zoo.

Harpal Singh, public relations officer, wildlife-cum-zoo education officer, meanwhile, provided an overview of the current status of tiger populations in India. He discussed key challenges such as habitat

CM Urges TN to Help Build Mekedatu Reservoir

Our Bureau

Bengaluru: With Karnataka receiving good rainfall in the Cauvery catchment area, Tamil Nadu will receive good inflow, some of which will flow wastefully into the Bay of Bengal, chief minister Siddaramaiah said on Tuesday while urging the neighbouring state to come to the negotiating table and facilitate a balancing reservoir at Mekedatu at the interstate border.

In a normal rainfall year, Karnataka is required to release 192 tmc ft of water to TN, but 665 tmc ft flowed in 2022-23. This year, already 83 tmc ft of



The CM rued that both states were losing water in excess rainfall years for want of reservoirs to impound the surplus water

water has flowed, he said, ruing how both states are losing water in excess rainfall years for want of reservoirs to impound the surplus water. If TN and the Centre allow Karnataka to build a balancing reservoir, it it would help the neighbour-

ing state more, the CM told reporters at the KRS reservoir after offering pooja on it becoming full. The TN leaders, however, have been opposing the project for the sake of politics, Siddaramaiah said, and urged Mandya MP and Union minister HD Kumaraswamy to use his clout to get the permission to the state.

The multipurpose dam will need about 5,000 acres of land. Karnataka has planned the reservoir for 67 tmc ft (thousand million cubic feet) capacity, much larger than KRS dam's storage capacity of 45 tmc ft. The Mekedatu project also involves a 400-MW hydel generating station.

If the project takes shape, it will take care of the drinking water needs of Bengaluru and nearby towns and villages for the next 100 years, experts say.

The Cauvery Tribunal has allocated 17 tmc ft of water for Karnataka's drinking water needs. TN, on the other hand, has got 29 tmc ft for its drinking water needs. The Mekedatu reservoir, experts say, will regulate the flow of water and whenever the state has a surplus, it will help to meet the drinking water needs of Bengaluru and strengthen the water table. It will also provide water to wildlife in Tamil Nadu-Karnataka border forests.

WILD | LIFE

31 representatives from 11 different companies attend the event

CSR donors felicitated on Int'l Tiger Day

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, JULY 29

Forest officials at Amrabad Tiger Reserve celebrated International Tiger Day on Monday by felicitating donors who helped set up solar-powered bore wells and forest clinics at the wildlife reserve.

A total of 31 representatives from 11 firms attended the event.

They included Hyderabad Tiger Conservation Society (HyTICOS),



ICICI Foundation, Apollo Total Health, Nirmaan Organisation, Rural Development Trust,

Prosperiti Homes Pvt.Ltd, Switcheko Sustainability, ELifecycle Management Pvt Ltd, United Way of

Hyderabad, Bhumika Women's Collective and Community Development Foundation. The donations were made at Environmental Education Centre (EEC) Mannanur under the Corporate Social Responsibility category.

The contributions helped in procuring patrolling vehicles, rescue vans, fire blowers, water tankers, shoes for front-line staff, camera traps and in the setting up of

solar-powered projects and forest clinics, forest officials said.

District forest officer, Nagarkurnool, Rohit Gopidi thanked the donors. "These firms positively responded to our proposals and they reaffirmed their commitment towards conservation of Amrabad Tiger Reserve," said forest staff Sushant Bobade.



ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE | The suspects were caught while they were trying to trade a tigress skin

Customs nab 6 poachers

Ankit Shukla

PUNE

The Customs Department has busted a gang of six people, including two women, who were involved in poaching for many years, an official said on Monday. "In a meticulously planned operation by Pune Customs officials, in collaboration with Nagpur Customs, an illegal trade of tigress skin was successfully intercepted in the early morning hours of July 26 on Bhusawal Road, Jalgaon, leading to the arrest of six individuals. They have been identified as Ajvar Sujat Bhosale (35), Rahim Pardhi (45), Teva Bai Pardhi (40), Karkana Bai (30), Nadim Shaikh (26) and Mohammad Athar Khan (58)," said the official.

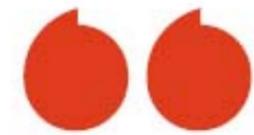
According to the official, "The accused Rahim Pardhi is the leader of the gang and responsible for the killing of the tigress. While investigating the matter, it came to light that the poachers poisoned the carcass of a Nilgai in the Jalgaon forest division, waiting for the tigress to return and feed on it. Once the tigress consumed the poisoned meat, it fell ill and turned weak. The poachers then drowned the tigress in water and killed it. The tigress was skinned in the forests of Mad-



hya Pradesh by the accused around 45 days ago. The rest of the body parts were dumped in the forest ground." The seized tigress skin and the suspects have been handed over to the jurisdictional forest department for further investigation.

This remarkable case marks one of the first instances where the Customs teams from Pune and Nag-

pur, typically stationed at ports and border points, conducted an on-ground investigation leading to a significant wildlife crime bust at the source. Notably, the team of officers from Pune Customs had previously been involved in the seizure of a leopard skin less than six months ago and a tiger trophy less than a month ago. All six accused have been booked under Section 50 of the Wildlife Protec-



The price of the skin in the international market is about ₹5 crore. It has been identified as per the investigation that the skin was new, and had been skinned 40 to 45 days earlier.

— **Yashodhan Wanage**,
Commissioner, Pune Customs

tion Act, 1972, for their involvement in the illegal wildlife trade.

Speaking to The Free Press Journal, Yashodhan Wanage, Commissioner of Pune Customs, said, "We got a tip-off about the illegal trade in Jalgaon. Acting on the tip-off, our team intercepted six people and detained a woman who had wrapped the tigress skin around her body to hide it." "The price of the skin in the international market is about ₹5 crore. It has been identified as per the investigation that the skin was new, and had been skinned 40 to 45 days earlier," he added.

Endangered vulture on Chennai road springs a surprise

SV KRISHNA CHAITANYA @ Chennai

A White-rumped vulture, categorised as critically endangered, was found battling for life on a road in Chennai and eventually succumbed on Monday.

A sub-adult, the raptor bird was rescued by the public and handed over to the forest department headquarters range office in Velachery on Sunday afternoon. Considering its poor health, the vulture was immediately taken to Besant Memorial Animal Dispensary (BMAD) for treatment. However, the bird

couldn't be saved, Chennai wildlife warden Manish Meena told *TNIE*.

But, the question is how did a White-rumped vulture end up on Chennai road as there is no known resident population of vultures in and around the city. Meena said it is very rare. "We have sent the raptor bird to Vandalur Zoo for postmortem. Only after receiving the report, can we draw inferences," he said.

It was initially suspected that the bird might have escaped from Vandalur zoo, which recently received a few vultures as part of

an animal exchange programme. However, the zoo authorities denied it, saying their vulture number is intact.

Chief Wildlife Warden Srinivas R Reddy said it would be one of those stray movements. There are instances where single vultures were spotted in Kanniyakumari.

V Santharam, ornithologist and director of Institute of Bird Studies in Rishi Valley, said vultures are highly capable of flying for long distances. Their range is between 80-100 km which they can cover in a couple of hours.



The White-rumped vulture that was found on a road in RA Puram | EXPRESS

"In the 1990s, there was a large population of about 20-30 nesting vultures on Sriharikota island. Due to tall trees and less distur-

bance, they made the island their safe haven. They were also seen in the Nellapattu area," Santharam said.

As per the recent synchronised vulture population estimation, the state continues to remain the preferable nesting and foraging ground for these critically-endangered birds. The data say Mudumalai Tiger Reserve recorded the highest vulture population of 78 in the entire landscape, followed by Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve - 70, Bandipur tiger Reserve in Karnataka - 65, and Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary - 51.

Experts must help increase tigers' numbers

The world marked World Tiger Day recently, but this year has been grim for tigers. According to data from the National Tiger Conservation Authority, India has witnessed 81 tiger deaths so far this year. Madhya Pradesh reported the highest number of tiger fatalities, followed by Maharashtra and Telangana.

A co-founder of the wildlife group CLaW had said that they celebrate being the country with the largest population of tigers in the wild, but

highlighted a huge responsibility of conserving them. He added that the alarmingly high tiger mortality figures in the current calendar year should concern us adding that there should be a robust mechanism in place, otherwise, we could very soon see their population dwindling. All those linear development projects around parks, poor rate of conviction in wildlife crimes, lack of mitigation measures in decades-old highways, etc are the primary contributors that can negatively

affect the growth story he stated. A conservationist stated that human-tiger conflict is inevitable, resulting in tiger mortality, and our tigers face severe threats due to poaching as well.

Experts must sit down and chalk out a sustainable and long-lasting system to ensure we can conserve the tiger population and up their numbers.

While animal-human conflict may be inevitable given development, there are ways in which humans at least in urban areas can lessen this. Poaching

needs more awareness and extremely stringent punishment and penalties. A better rate of conviction in wildlife crimes will serve both as a deterrent and a lesson.

In the end, our urban children need much more awareness about the importance of wildlife, ecological balance and the importance of conservation. If this can be taught in schools, young people will realise that a tiger is more than just a tiger and the importance of all fauna in the ecosystem.

First time in Raj, HC orders shifting of tribal hamlet

Move To Help Residents Get Basic Amenities

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Jaipur/Jodhpur: Rajasthan High Court's principal seat in Jodhpur on Monday directed the state to relocate the tribal hamlet of Kharni Tokri from Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary. This relocation, the first of its kind in the state following a court order, has been necessitated by the fact that the village is situated deep within the wildlife sanctuary, depriving the residents of basic amenities such as roads, electricity, and water. Despite previous representations from the villagers requesting to be moved out, the forest department had not addressed their concerns.

The court has directed that the relocation process be completed within three months. A copy of the order is to be sent to the secretary of the forest department. Additionally, the State Legal Aid Authority has been asked to inform people of Kumbhalgarh and surrounding tribal areas about the relocation



A STEP FORWARD

and related schemes meant for them.

Advocate Rituraj Singh Rathore, who has been representing the petitioner tribals, said, "The court noted that the NTCA's report had also recommended relocating the hamlets and villages from the protected areas. The state govt had previously established a scheme in 2002 for relocating communities from sanctuaries and national parks in Rajasthan."

The small hamlet has around 25 kutchha houses under jurisdiction of Ghanerao

gram panchayat in Pali district. Half of the families in the hamlet have sought shelter elsewhere, not only due to lack of amenities but also because of the threat of wild animals.

Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary spans an extensive area of 610.528 square kilometers, encompassing a core zone of 224.890 square kilometers and a buffer zone of 385.638 square kilometers. "The sanctuary has a significant number of nilgais (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), sambhars (*Rusa unicolor*), and other animals that destroy crops. There are also many sloth bears and leopards, and the possibility of man-animal conflicts persists," said a resident of the hamlet.

In Aug 2023, Kumbhalgarh received in-principle approval to be declared as another tiger reserve. NTCA endorsed the proposal on Aug 4, and Union ministry of environment, forest, and climate change subsequently granted preliminary approval.

Global Tiger Day observed at Kaziranga, Sootea

CORRESPONDENT

KAZIRANGA, July 29: The Global Tiger Day was observed in the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve today which was organized in collaboration with several institutions, and NGOs associated with wildlife and nature.

Significantly, at the national held event in New Delhi, the National Tiger Conservation Authority organized the programme where four frontline staff of the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve were awarded for their extraordinary services towards conservation and protection of wildlife under the category of 'Wildlife protection and Anti-poaching activities'. The awards were presented to Gagan Kakati of Bokakhat range, Sunil Hazarika of Agaratoli range, Debojit Doley of Bokakhat range – all constables of the Assam Forest Protection Force – and Mintu Das, boatman of Agaratoli range.

These four frontline staff of Kaziranga were awarded by the Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav among other 13 frontline staff of 11 tiger reserves of the country.

It is worth mentioning that the four forest personnel of the Kaziranga National Park were honoured for their extraordinary bravery when on May 11 last, they successfully thwarted a rhino poaching attempt, demonstrating proactive action and recovered weapons from the poachers. The incident signalled a strong message of complete zero tolerance towards poachers and warned that any intruder attempting to exploit the park's rich biodiversity will be strongly dealt with.

Meanwhile, the Kaziranga National Park authority extended gratitude to all the dedicated personnel who put their own lives at risks while ensuring the safety of wild animals.

The day also marked the death anniversary of Mahi Patir Miri who was the first Assamese ACF in the imperial Forest Service and dedicated his life for the conservation of forests in Kaziranga.

The Global Tiger Day was observed with the active participation of school children coming from different schools of Kaziranga at Kohora today. There was a cultural programme, an art competition and an exhibition where students of different schools were actively involved. This was followed by an awareness meeting at Bokakhat Tea Estate at Lotabari.

The day was also observed with a discussion with the NSS student volunteers of four colleges, namely, JDSG College of Bokakhat, Kaziranga Government Model College, Koliabor College and CNB College of Bokakhat.

Jamugurihat Correspondent adds: The Global Tiger Day 2024, convened by the Wildlife Division, Biswanath in a joint collaboration of local NGOs Upatyaka, WWF and ARO was held at the Dr Zakir Hussain ME School located at Adabheti, Sootea today.

In this connection, an awareness meeting was held in the conference hall of the school which was addressed by Soidur Rahman, managing director of the NGO Upatyaka. Rahman spoke on the significance of the Global Tiger Day and made an appeal to all concerned to put their hands together in tiger conservation.

IIT-I selected to augment afforestation on 50 hectare

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Indore: The Indian Institute of Technology, Indore (IIT-I), has been selected by the ministry of environment, forest and climate change for Nagar Van Yojana (NVY), an initiative aimed at promoting urban forestry and tree plantation on vacant land.

IIT-I is the first technology institute in the country and the sole educational institute in Indore district chosen under the National Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) for NVY.

An expanse of 50 hectare of forest land will be earmarked for development, focusing on afforestation, enriching forest quality through assisted natural regeneration, amplifying biodiversity, enhancing wildlife habitats, mitigating forest fires and implementing soil and water conservation measures, IIT-I said.

A total of Rs 1.98 crore is sanctioned for the project, said IIT-I. Under the NVY, the govt aims to establish 400 Nagar Vans and 200 Nagar Vatikas across the nation during 2020-21 to 2024-25.

'India lost 528 elephants due to unnatural causes in 5 years, most from electrocution'

Odisha reported highest elephant deaths, with 71 from electrocution and 22 from train accidents

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: India lost 528 elephants in the last five years due to unnatural causes, including poaching, poisoning, electrocution, and train accidents, the government informed Parliament on Monday.

In response to a question by BJP MPs Jayanta Kumar Roy and Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo, Union minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh told the Lok Sabha that 392 elephants died from electrocution and 73 were killed in train accidents during this period. Fifty elephants were killed by poachers and 13 succumbed to poisoning, he said.

According to the government data tabled in the Lok Sabha, 71 elephants died due to electrocution in Odisha, 55 in Assam, 52 in Karnataka, 49 in Tamil Nadu, 32 in Chhattisgarh, 30 in Jharkhand, and 29 in Kerala. Assam and Odisha recorded 22 and 16 elephant deaths in train accidents. Poachers killed 17 pachyderms in Odisha, 14



A villager performs a prayer for a wild elephant killed by electrocution near Rani Reserve Forest, on Guwahati's outskirts

PIC/PTI

in Meghalaya, and 10 in Tamil Nadu. Ten elephants were poisoned in Assam, two in Chhattisgarh, and one in West Bengal. According to the last elephant census conducted in 2017, India has 29,964 elephants, which is around 60 per cent of their global population.

Data presented in Parliament last week revealed that human-elephant conflict resulted in 2,853 human deaths in India over the last five years, with the number of fatalities reaching a five-year high of

628 in 2023. The data revealed that Odisha recorded 624 such deaths during this period, Jharkhand 474, West Bengal 436, Assam 383, Chhattisgarh 303, Tamil Nadu 256, Karnataka 160, and Kerala 124. The minister said the management of wildlife habitats is primarily the responsibility of state governments and Union Territory administrations.

He said the central government provides financial and technical support under the centrally sponsored scheme

Closer Look

- » Electrocution caused 392 elephant deaths, while train accidents killed 73, and poaching resulted in 50 deaths, government told Parliament
- » Human-elephant conflicts caused 2,853 human deaths in India over the last five years, with 628 fatalities in 2023 alone
- » Guidelines issued for managing human-wildlife conflicts include cultivating unpalatable crops and protecting 150 validated elephant corridors

'Project Tiger & Elephant' for the protection of animals, their habitats and corridors, addressing human-animal conflict, and for the welfare of captive elephants. In February 2021, the ministry issued an advisory on dealing with human-wildlife conflict, recommending coordinated inter-departmental action, identification of conflict hotspots, adherence to standard operating procedures, and establishment of rapid response teams.

In June 2022, the ministry issued guidelines to states and Union Territories on manag-

ing human-wildlife conflicts, including damage to crops.

The guidelines promote the cultivation of crops in forest fringe areas that are unpalatable to wild animals, and the use of agroforestry models incorporating cash crops such as chillies, lemongrass, and khus grass, mixed with tree and shrub species. In coordination with state forest departments, the ministry has also ground-validated 150 elephant corridors across 15 elephant range states and has asked states and Union Territories to take necessary steps to protect and conserve these corridors.

India lost 528 elephants to unnatural causes in 5 yrs

India lost 528 elephants in the past five years due to unnatural causes,



including poaching, poisoning, electrocution, and train accidents, the government informed Parliament on Monday.

In response to a question by BJP MPs Jayanta Kumar Roy and Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo, Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh told the Lok Sabha that 392 elephants died from electrocution and 73 were killed in train accidents during this period.

Jumbo 'addicted to trash' captured, shifted to safety

Forest officials relocate elephant to Bannerghatta Zoo; locals raise suspicions over presence of one more tusker in area

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The forest officials of Karnataka have successfully captured the elephant that killed three people in Bannerghatta National Park (BNP) over the last ten days. "We have captured the elephant that had caused many human-elephant conflicts over the last one and a half years. The elephant was also involved in more than one of the recent three human deaths at BNP," said Prabhakar Priyadarshi, Deputy Conservator of Forest, BNP.

The capture operation of the wild elephant began on Monday morning after receiving the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) and the Chief Wildlife Warden of Karnataka permission. It was carried out by special teams of elephants brought in from the Nagarhole and Dubare elephant camps. Led by elephants Prashanth, Bhima, Mahendra, and Harsha, the team included eight elephants. "The makhna was shifted to Bannerghatta Zoo Kraal by 4:30 pm on Monday, as per the instruction of PCCF (Wildlife)," the DCF said.

The Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) decided to capture the makhna, popularly known as Bannerghatta makhna, after representations from local communities and political leaders. Before the operation involving more than 100 KFD staff on Monday morning, the elephant was tracked by the department.

Wildlife conservationists and researchers that BM spoke with



Forest officials and special teams of elephants at the capture operation site

said that the elephant was a regular at a garbage dump site near the BNP parking area. "The elephant captured was addicted to a garbage dump in the parking area in Bannerghatta and developed fearlessness towards human beings. However, sometimes BNP management decided to get rid of the garbage spot that left the makhna wandering. The wild elephant also used to visit Bannerghatta elephant camp and was exposed to female elephants. So the incidents involving the elephant were our doing," said Ramesh Belagere, a wildlife researcher at the Foundation of Ecology and Education Development.

Possibility of another tusker

Some local researchers also allege that while all three incidents of human deaths are being attributed to the makhna that was captured on Monday, there might be another single tusker involved. "People in the Kanakapura area have reported seeing another single tusker that roams around on streets mostly at night. Both the elephants were attracted to garbage dumps," alleged a wildlife conservationist in the area.

However, KFD officials have denied these claims. "We have not received information regard-

“People in Kanakapura area have reported seeing another single tusker that roams around on streets mostly at night

—Wildlife conservationist

ing a second elephant in the area. Moreover, there are slim chances of the makhna being attracted to and visiting the parking area. To do so, he would have to cross three to four gates, which are mostly locked," added DCF Priyadarshi.

TIGER STATE | State home to around 20% of the big cats in country

MP's tiger to roar in other states too

MP to give tigers to other states, says CM

Our Staff Reporter

BHOPAL

Highlighting that around 20% of the tigers in the entire country are found alone in Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said that the MP will provide tigers to other states to ensure that presence of the big cat is maintained throughout the country.

"We have got the title of Tiger State and its joy is different. I extend my greetings to everyone on this occasion of International Tiger Day," said the chief minister while addressing a programme organised by the forest department to mark the day here on Monday.

Yadav said that owing to better management of tiger reserves, the number of tourists is increasing in the state.

He further said that there are seven tiger reserves in the state and over 25 lakh tourists visit here in a year. The state also generates revenue of around 55 to 60 crores for the tourists. Along with this, cheetahs are also found in the state now. The work on the Cheetah project of Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary is in full swing where the next lot of cheetahs is expected in the future.

The CM also felicitated the forest personnel who have done exemplary work in wildlife conservation.



CM Mohan Yadav at programme held to mark International Tiger day on Monday at Kushabhau Thakre Convention (Minto) Hall.

'Lion is lazy, can't be the king of forest'

The Chief Minister said there is a general perception that Lion is the king of forest but it's not so. Tiger is the king of jungle in true sense as it is stronger, more courageous and agile than the latter, said Yadav.

"People consider the lion as the king of the jungle, but he is not a king. If we look at his nature, he is lazy in terms of his living. He does not hunt on his own. If one who cannot put effort for his living on his own strength, what kind of king can it be? Someone else hunts for the lion. While the tiger shows its might, it hunts its own prey."

He added that if someone asks people that if a herd of deer is passing then what lion will prefer as its catch and ninety per cent people will say that lion will look for fawn or old deer. On the other hand, the tiger chooses the healthiest prey and relishes it.

Here people moves on road in day and tigers at night

Speaking about the urban tigers roaming in the outskirts of the city, the chief minister said that Bhopal is the unique capital as people roam on roads

during the daytime and tigers move at night here. The tigers living around Bhopal have adjusted with the people and this thing is a research material.

King Cobra count

During his speech, CM expressed his concern over the decline in citing king Cobra in jungles. The chief minister

stressed on the need for conservation of King Cobra saying that efforts will be made in this direction.

New reserves to come up in regions with no tigers: CM

‘Madhya Pradesh Will Provide Tigers To Other States’

TIMES NEWS NETWORK



Forest officials give a memento to CM Mohan Yadav at the programme

Bhopal: Chief minister Mohan Yadav, while congratulating tiger lovers on International Tiger Day, said Madhya Pradesh is fortunate to have the maximum number of tigers in the country

“Bhopal is the only capital in the country where tigers roam freely around its municipal limits. New tiger reserves will be developed in the areas of the state where there are no tigers. The tiger is our national animal; hence, for the survival of the tiger in all the states, Madhya Pradesh will provide tigers to other states also.” CM said.

He was addressing a state-level programme at Kushabhau Thackeray auditorium on the occasion of International Tiger Day. He inaugurated the programme by lighting the lamp.

The chief minister also honoured employees and officers for their excellent work in the conservation of forests and wild animals.

On this occasion, forest minister Ramniwas Rawat, minister of state for forests, Dilip Ahirwar, and minister of state for backward classes and minority welfare, Krishna Gaur were also present.

Chief minister said that due to the conservation of wild animals and better management of the tiger reserve, the number of tourists is also increasing.

Additional chief secretary, forest, Ashok Barnawal, principal chief conservator of forests and chief of forest

force, Aseem Srivastava, principal chief conservator of forests (Wildlife), Shubh-aranjan Singh, officers and employees of the forest department and tiger lovers attended the programme.

Yadav also inaugurated an exhibition and released three books of the forest department on voluntary village relocation.

Short films focussing on Tiger Warriors, Panch Land of Tiger, and Bison restoration were also screened on the occasion.

A Moeed Faruqui

No Nat Wildlife Board nod given for Kalasa project, LS informed

K'taka had sought 11 hectares for the irrigation project

THE GOAN | NETWORK

PANAJI

The Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) on Monday informed Lok Sabha that the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) has not granted any approval so far on Karnataka's application for the diversion of forest land for the construction of the Kalasa nala irrigation project in the Mhadei basin.

In a question tabled by the South Goa MP Captain Viriato Fernandes, Union Minister said the application came up for the discussion before the Standing Committee of the NBWL during its 77th meeting held in January, this year.

"However, no approval for this project has been given by the Board so far," the Minister said.

The proposal was for the use of around 11 hectares of forest land situated on the tiger corridor between Kali and Sahyadri tiger reserves. This is supposed to be for the con-

struction of a diversion weir, jack well-cum-pump house, electrical substation, pipeline and power line at Kankumbi and other villages.

The project is a part of the State government's project for the construction of Kalasa Nala Diversion Scheme in Khanapur taluk of Belagavi district.

As reported earlier, the NBWL's, headed by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's standing committee cited multiple reasons such as the matter pending before courts and non-receipt of approval from the National Tiger Conservation Authority as the reasons.

The Central Water Commission gave in-principle approval for the project in 2022 and the same was strongly opposed by Goa government before the Centre.

The Supreme Court, that is hearing the several petitions filed by the three riparian States -- Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra, has listed the matter for next hearing in August.

Odisha to launch 1st black tiger safaris

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha government has stepped up the work for the proposed melanistic tiger safari near Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Mayurbhanj district. Once the safari work is complete, it will offer the visitors a 'never-before opportunity' to see melanistic tigers. Principal chief conservator of forests (PCCF - wildlife) Susanta Nanda on Monday informed that a melanistic tiger safari will come up on 100 acres of land. "The visitors coming to Similipal were not able to have a sight of the tigers and the possibility of seeing them live was less than one per cent. However, sightings have now improved. At least 99 per cent of visitors, who used to return without seeing melanistic tigers, will soon have the opportunity to see them," said Nanda. The PCCF informed that NTC and an expert committee of Central Zoo Authority (CZA) have given their nod. "We are waiting for the CZA's technical committee nod. Necessary works are going on and we hope that tiger safari will be opened for the visitors by year end," Nanda added.

{ RARE SIGHTINGS }

Pelagic birds land up on Mumbai's shores, delighting birdwatchers

Sabah Virani

sabah.virani@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: Starting July 25, news of a rare occurrence spread like wildfire in the small bird enthusiast community in the city: pelagic birds, who spend a large portion of their lives on the open ocean, were being sighted on Mumbai's coast.

Under normal circumstances, getting a glimpse of these avians would require a boat ride 60-70 km into the sea and an ounce of good luck. But thanks to the stormy weather and heavy rains, the birds were being swept towards land by the strong winds and delivered to Mumbai's doorstep.

"Our group of 13 was one of the 10-15 groups of birders that went on a bird-watching hop on Sunday," said Aseem Kothalia, a Santacruz resident. "By 7 am, we had reached the Radio Club Jetty, from where we went to Sassoon Docks, Geeta Nagar, and then back, bird watching till

3 pm."

Kothalia is part of a WhatsApp group of 400 bird enthusiasts, of which 250-300 are from the Mumbai-Thane region. When the news broke, nearly 100 people tried their luck almost immediately, with no intention of missing their chance at the rare sighting.

"While other birder communities might try to hide details of their sightings and keep them exclusive, the Mumbai birder spirit is different," said Rakesh Dhareshwar, a Goa resident in the group. "People shared live sightings of the birds they'd seen along with the location so others could join them. The energy was so infectious that even I tried my luck, spotting a Great Frigatebird for the first time in the recorded history of Goa."

According to Dhareshwar, pelagic birds—like Lesser Noddy, Brown Noddy, Lesser Frigatebird, Bridled Tern, Saunders's Tern, and Masked Booby



Saunders's Tern



Bridled Tern

Pelagic birds, which spend their lifetime over the ocean, are seen sporadically along India's western coast. ASEEM KOTHALIA AND YASH KOTHALIA

— are uncommon though not unexpected visitors to the Indian coast.

"There are always a few sightings in the monsoon. But this time, due to the weeks of continuous stormy weather, which means the winds across the ocean are even rougher, it is

probable that more of them have reached the shore," he said.

Pelagic birds are seen sporadically along the western coast of India, from Gujarat to Kerala, said Sunjoy Monga, an ornithologist. "For a few months in a year, they breed on far-off

islands spread across."

At their first spot, the Radio Club Jetty, Kothalia and gang spotted their first Pelagic bird of the day: a Bridled Tern. They then moved along, by 9 am, to Sassoon Docks, where they spotted a Lesser Frigatebird. Onto Geeta Nagar next, they

came across a Saunders's Tern. For the entire group, all these birds were "lifers", meaning they had spotted them for the first time. Kothalia's own bird count on spotting the three new species jumped from 1,003 to 1,006.

The flock of bird enthusiasts

was apparent on the eBird list of rare bird sightings in the past seven days: at least 60 Lesser Frigatebird, 30 Lesser Noddy, 50 Bridled Tern, and 50 Saunders's Tern sightings were reported in Mumbai, confirmed and unconfirmed. eBird is an online platform for birders to maintain records of their sightings.

As per Kothalia, there are 25-30 Bridled Terns, 4-5 Saunders's Terns, 2-3 lesser Frigatebirds on Mumbai's coast, with an additional 4-5 Lesser Noddy birds at Elephanta Caves. "One Brown Noddy was also spotted at Elephanta Caves, but he was dead," Kothalia added.

As Mumbai does not feature in the bird's charted flight path—for mating, the birds prefer deserted islands with scarce humans and other bird species—the birds landing upon the shores are stranded.

"Fighting the heavy winds is taxing for the birds, especially the older and younger ones. Many a time, they are found

dehydrated and exhausted, and sometimes injured," said Pawan Sharma from Resqink Association for Wildlife Welfare or RAWW, an NGO. "In some cases, the birds just need a safe passage so they can rest till the winds die down and the time is right to fly back."

Not all are that lucky, though. Sharma said a Masked Booby was found on Gorai beach, the search for which is still on. Two Lesser Noddys found in Navi Mumbai died, one of which HT had reported about on July 16.

However, the birds spotted by Kothalia were in generally good condition, possibly because of the advantages offered by Mumbai, with many boat resting spots nearby. "The Saunders's Tern seemed the most tired of them all and was resting on rocks, flying occasionally and then returning, as though it was recuperating. The rest were in great condition," said Kothalia, who has already made plans to bird-watch again this weekend.

Project Tiger will displace 5.5 lakh tribals: report

The Hindu Bureau

GUWAHATI

Project Tiger will displace at least 5.5 lakh Scheduled Tribes and other forest dwellers, a report released by a New Delhi-based rights group on Global Tiger Day on Monday said.

The number of people displaced from 50 tiger reserves before 2021 was 2,54,794, which worked out to about 5,000 per protected area.

The average number of people to be displaced from six tiger reserves since 2021 is 48,333, a 967% increase in displacement over the pre-2021 period, the report titled "India's Tiger Reserves: Tribals Get Out, Tourists Welcome" said.

According to the report by the Rights and Risks Analysis Group, some 1,60,000 people out of about 2,90,000 people to be displaced in the post-2021 period would be from the Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary in Rajasthan, followed by 72,772 people from the Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh, and 45,000 from the Ranipur Tiger Reserve in Uttar Pradesh.

The report also highlighted forced evictions through massive human rights violations.

Free Press Journal Mumbai, 30 July 2024

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



HASAN ZAIDI

Tiger safety is vital

'Call for action' is a succinct theme for International Tiger Day, 2024. Fight against wildlife crime and strengthening protected areas are two critical areas that warrant immediate action. The lacunae in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 led to the refined Wild Life Protection (Amendment) Act, 2006 that has clear provisions on tiger conservation.

Dr Ganapathi Bhat, Akola

INTERNATIONAL TIGER DAY

'Tigers of Western Ghats have lower genetic variation'

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

THE tiger gene pool in central India has a larger genetic variation when compared to that of Western Ghats and South India.

This was revealed in a recent study by a team of 11 researchers, including those from the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS). The study -- Genomic Analysis of Isolated Tiger Populations, published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America -- stated that the southern large-connected population is disconnected from other tiger population genetic clusters in India, while the central, large-connected population was connected by gene flow to other tiger clusters.

Uma Ramakrishnan, co-author of the paper and researcher from NCBS, told The New Indian Express that samples of over 100 wild individuals have been collected, including the ones that have been relocated and captured in Karnataka. "The forest department is now getting people together, including scientists and forensic experts, to work on preparing a scientific database on gene pool. It has been found that cases of inbreeding are on the rise."

In the study, researchers noted that increased agriculture, bounty hunting, poach-

ing, habitat loss and fragmentation have led to local extinctions of tiger populations.

The small-isolated population that was studied had less than 100 individuals, but was connected to the central large-connected population and potentially to the now-extinct tiger population in Afghanistan. They quantified the inbreeding by identifying long stretches of the genome that are homozygous and identical by descent.

"The large southern population has more inbred individuals than the large central population, potentially due to its geo-graphical placement, historic size and connectivity," noted the study. The researchers also found that pairs of individuals from the small-isolated population also shared large tracts of genome that were inbred.

Data of researchers prepared from India is also being compared and studied with that of Southeast Asia by researchers from other countries, including China.

To control man-animal conflict, the Karnataka forest department, is working on using scientific tools. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, wildlife, Subhash Malkhade, said camera traps are placed in conflict areas and using scientific data, plans are being drawn on how tigers can be relocated.



Students wear tiger masks to mark International Tiger Day to create awareness on saving the animal in Bengaluru on Monday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

Unnatural, unsolved tiger & jumbo deaths worry govt

Devansh Vyas

Niranjan.Kaggere
 @timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Karnataka, which is credited with the best conservation efforts and a salubrious wildlife population, is worried about the deaths of tigers and elephants due to unnatural and unknown reasons in protected areas.

TIMES Special

The state has lost 66 tigers and 372 elephants over the past five years (2020-24). While some of these deaths were natural, a significant number have either been unnatural or where the reason has been difficult to ascertain.

“While 48 (72%) tigers had natural deaths, seven (10%) met with unnatural deaths. In case of another 11 tigers (16%), we couldn’t ascertain

PROSECUTION TROUBLES

Alongside the detection and documentation issues, what is ailing the forest department is the slow progress of prosecution of incidents of unnatural deaths of both animals. One case in particular is the amputation of four legs of a tiger in Dec 2022 in Haliyal division of Uttara Kannada; till date, the miscreants haven’t been nabbed.

A recent review of the progress of prosecution of wildlife deaths by the PCCF (wildlife) revealed there was hardly any progress in several cases. “The problem in most of the cases was the presentation of circumstantial evidence, which advocates don’t endorse. Several times, they ask us to get evidence as per IPC, CrPC and Evidence Act. But how in the wild will we be able to collect all such details? It is high time the department had its own legal wing to present and defend all its cases,” an officer opined.

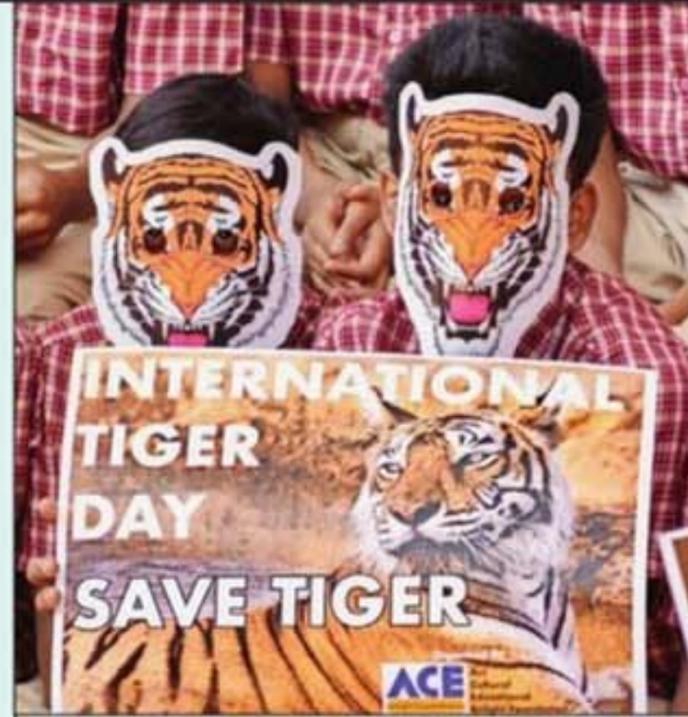
the cause of death,” said a senior forest official.

Karnataka ranks second in tiger population, with 563 tigers spread over its five tiger reserves and other areas.

Similarly, the state repor-

ted a whopping 372 elephant deaths over the past five years. “As many as 305 (82%) elephants died naturally and 67 (18%) met with unnatural deaths,” the officer explained.

In several cases of unna-



STRIPED: More than 250 high school students gathered for a ‘Save Tiger’ awareness campaign to commemorate World Tiger Day in the city on Monday

TIGER DEATHS

Year	Natural	Unnatural	Unknown causes
2020-21	10	1	2
2021-22	13	2	4
2022-23	11	3	2
2023-24	9	1	2
2024-25	5	0	1

ELEPHANT DEATHS

Year	Natural	Unnatural
2020-21	58	16
2021-22	73	16
2022-23	58	16
2023-24	87	14
2024-25	29	5

Source: Forest dept

the face of death and withdrawn to remote areas. In monsoon months, it is very difficult even to sense the smell of carcass. Even if the staff sniff the bodies, they would be unable to reach the area because of dense growth of lantana and other weeds. Nevertheless, field staffers have been making the best of efforts to detect and document deaths,” he said.

If snaring and poisoning are major reasons for unnatural deaths of tigers, electrocution is the big threat for elephants. “Almost all unnatural deaths of elephants were largely due to electrocution when they tried to sneak into human habitations in search of food and water. We’ve been sensitizing farmers and those inhabiting the peripheral areas about these deaths which are avoidable,” another senior forest official said.

hede, principal chief conservator of forests and chief wildlife warden of Karnataka, attributed the delay largely to inhospitable terrain. “In some cases, the animals would have become reclusive in

tural death and where the cause of death couldn’t be ascertained, staffers were unable to locate the carcasses for weeks, leading to difficulties in ascertaining the reason for death. Subhash Malk-

Vulture rescued in Alwarpet dies of dehydration

Oppili P@timesofindia.com

Chennai: A juvenile white-rumped vulture that strayed into the city and was rescued from R A Puram on Sunday before being handed over to the wildlife headquarters range office in Velachery died on Monday. Officials said the bird was too weak to survive despite the best of efforts.

A resident from R A Puram rescued the bird and brought it to the wildlife office. The famished vulture was taken to the Besant Memorial Animal Dispensary for treatment, but it did not survive.

The carcass was sent to the Arignar Anna Zoological Park in Vandalur for postmortem. Results said that dehydration, lesions caused by diseases and kidney inflammation were the reasons behind the bird's death.

S Bharathi Dasan of Arulagam, a Coimbatore-based organization invol-



RARE: The white-rumped vulture, native to southeast Asia, has been listed as critically endangered on IUCN Red List

ved in vulture conservation, said the species is found in good numbers in the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve and the adjoining Mudumalai area, where an estimate pegs the number of White-rumped vultures at 180.

Juvenile vultures often stray from their home to explore new areas. This bird likely landed in Chennai, where it struggled to find food, leading to dehydration and internal injuries.

Windmill power lines are killing peacocks

FPJ News Service

KUTCH

In Lakhpat taluka, a troubling issue has emerged as frequent electric shocks from the earthing line of a private company's windmill are causing the deaths of peacocks, India's national bird. Recently, two more peacocks died due to electrocution, prompting the Forest Department to launch an investigation and undertake operations including Panchanan.

Lalubha Jethubha Padhiar, the sarpanch of Waghapadhar village, stated that despite informing the private company responsible for the windmill, no protective measures have been taken to safeguard the peacocks. He reported that in the past month alone, an estimated 8 to 10 peacocks have succumbed to electrocution. The continuous loss of these birds has sparked concern among wildlife enthusiasts and local residents alike.

The residents of Lakhpat and Abdasa are very worried about the survival of the peacock population in their area. They fear that if immediate action is not taken, they may soon vanish from their region. The locals are calling for legal action against the private company operating the windmill.

The Indian Express

New Delhi, 30 July 2024

Woman attempts to smuggle tiger skin under saree, held

SUSHANT KULKARNI

PUNE, JULY 29

IN A joint action of Pune and Nagpur Customs sleuths, the hide of a tigress worth over Rs 5 crore was seized from a woman concealing it under her saree, as she attempted to smuggle it to sell to international buyers. The action was conducted in Jalgaon district and a total of six persons, including the woman and the wildlife smuggling ring's alleged mastermind, were arrested on Friday.



Seized skin of a tigress in Jalgaon.

Arul Horizon

The tigress was poached — poisoned and then drowned in a forest area along the border of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Arrested suspects were identified as Ajvar Sujat Bhosale (35), Rahim Pardhi (45), Teva Bai Pardhi (40), Kakana Bai (30), Nadim Shaikh (26) and Athar.