

• **Tiger seen from train.**

Dr. Ullas Karanth and Valmik Thapar had the extraordinary luck of seeing a tiger from the Shatabdi Express as it sped through **Rajaji National Park** one evening in March.

• **Weed menace in Corbett**

The Uttar Pradesh Forest Department says that about 50 exotic species of weeds are threatening the indigenous flora at **Corbett Tiger Reserve** and Rajaji National Park. According to experts from the National Botanical Research Institute **biological control** and silvicultural operations are required. The forest department has **sought funds** of Rs 9 crore (approx US\$ 2.25 million) to fight the weed menace which they claim covers 600 km<sup>2</sup>. As the country's total budget for weed eradication is only Rs 21 crore, it is unlikely that 28% of it would be given to an area which other experts do not consider to be so seriously affected.

MoEF has constituted an expert committee to assess the situation.

Source: Rahul Karmakar, *Hindustan Times* 19 January 1999; MoEF

• **Corbett man—elephant conflict**

The four villages of Dhikuli, Ringora, Dhela and Savaldeo forming a ring around the southern and south-east edge of **Corbett Tiger Reserve**, are facing the problem of elephant raids on crops. Two people were recently killed by elephants and in February **two elephants** were found **poached** for their ivory.

Field Director, R.C. Gautam says that the reasons for this increased conflict arise from two events—the loss of bamboo in the 1995 fires and the floods last year that disrupted the migratory routes of the elephants.

Rs 1.5 crore had earlier been given for construction of a wall to reduce such conflict outside the southern part of the reserve. According to the Project Tiger Director, this should be "*nearing completion*". However it is learnt that, in the way of government funds, the money was held up at state level and not released on time, resulting in it being far from complete at present.

Source: Ajay Suri, *Indian Express* 22 March 1999; PT Directorate

• **New Field Director**

Shri R.C. Gautam who was Field Director of **Corbett Tiger Reserve** since 1995 has been posted as Conservator Forests, Agra. The new Field Director is **Shri Mohammad Ahsan** from Yamuna Circle who was earlier Director, Kanpur Zoo and Director, Rajaji National Park.

• **HWW appointment**

The Government of U.P. has re-appointed **Shri Brijendra Singh** as **Honorary Wildlife Warden** for three years from 20 March 1999 of the Nainital and Pauri Districts, including **Corbett Tiger Reserve**. Brijendra Singh's association with Corbett has spanned several decades. He is also member of the Indian Board for Wildlife and of the Project Tiger Steering Committee.

• **Fires hit Corbett**

As in so many parts of India, **Corbett Tiger Reserve** has **suffered** particularly badly from forest **fires** this year especially in the hill areas. Inadequate funds, staff and equipment resulted in the park management being unable to prevent or fight these efficiently. Honorary Wildlife Warden, Shri Brijendra Singh, also says that there is a lack of co-ordination be-

tween ranges that hampers fire-fighting operations. He suggests that a Fire Officer of the rank of ACF needs to be appointed to coordinate between the six most affected ranges and adequate vehicles, mobile radio sets and staff should be at his disposal.

Source: Shri Brijendra Singh, member Project Tiger Steering Committee

• **NGO's activities**

**Operation Eye of the Tiger-India** (OET-I), a Dehra Dun based NGO, was launched in April 1996 to help save the tiger. Founding members are Mr. A.S. Negi, a former director of Corbett Tiger Reserve, Dr. R. Sukumar, Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and Dr. A.J.T. Johnsingh, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehra Dun.

OET-I is working in **Corbett Tiger Reserve** and the surrounding areas. A programme to **reduce the dependence** of neighbouring villages **on the forest** was initiated, under which 238 families in the northern boundary villages of the Reserve were given one time assistance of Rs 1,000 each to get LPG connections.

OET-I has conducted 13 **medical camps** in the northern boundary—1,224 people benefited from this programme as free medicines and assistance was given. Banners promoting tiger conservation were displayed at all these camps.

A programme to **reduce** the number of scrub cattle **grazing** in the Reserve is also underway. Five scrub cattle are substituted by one cross-bred Jersey cow. So far eight cross-bred Jersey cows and four bulls have been given away.

To **boost the morale** of wildlife staff, the NGO has taken up two programmes—providing financial assistance to family members of staff who have died on duty and of-

fering scholarships to meritorious staff children. To date, assistance has been given to three families who have lost their men while on duty and 14 children from classes IX to XII are being assisted.

*Operation Eye of the Tiger-India* has also trained and engaged five local people to gather information on poaching and on the status of large mammals. On one occasion a poacher was arrested with the help of one of their informers who was then awarded Rs 1,000.

Source: OET-I report for April 1996–Dec. 1998

### • **Pilibhit needs protection**

A local NGO, *Pariyavaran Sudhar Sansthan* (PSS), reports that protection of the **Pilibhit forest** area has been **neglected** ever since 1994, when the staff was transferred to Dy. Director Palia, Dudhwa NP. In 1995–96 a Wildlife Warden was again posted in the Pilibhit Division but could not be effective as he has no vehicle nor staff, leaving the wildlife and the forests to the mercy of poachers.

The Pilibhit forests are between the Lagga Bhagga Barahi range and the Dudhwa area of Lakhimpur Kheri. **8 to 10 tigers** are still in the Pilibhit forests and **5 cubs** were seen in the last year which shows that the area still has potential of being good tiger habitat.

The PSS has been working in Pilibhit since 1987 and want to develop more grass-root protection work. They are **looking for collaboration and funds** from national and international organisations to launch a joint programme in Pilibhit to protect tigers, their habitat and the other denizens of the forests.

Source: Pravez Haneef, PSS, 71 Sheikh Chand, Pilibhit 262 001 Tel: (05882) 42107

### • **Action plan for Terai tiger**

Tiger Trust Society is a non-profit voluntary organisation formed in April 1997. It has drawn up a **Conservation Action Plan (CAP)** for implementation in selected buffer areas of important tiger reserves like **Corbett and Dudhwa**. The CAP emphasises "*educating the local communities, tribals and general masses about the great need for saving the tiger and its ecosystem*". It gives priority to resolving conflict between man and the big cats and to addressing local grievances with a view to developing local community 'Tiger Guardians' to deter poachers and "*vengeance poisoning*".

The society reports that a recent survey of **Dudhwa Tiger Reserve** revealed an "*alarming fall*" in the **tiger population**. They believe that "*not more than 15–20 tigers*" are surviving against the forest department claim of "*more than 70*". The society cites poaching, poisoning, the "*woeful shortage*" of forest guards and vehicles and the open nature of the border with Nepal as some of the more serious problems affecting the tiger population in the area.

The *Tiger Trust Society* report that they have a strong base in the Corbett/Dudhwa N.P. and terai forest belt and can be called upon to undertake all kinds of implementation of programmes being carried out by other NGOs in these areas. However they are also in **need of funds** to implement the Terai Tiger Project effectively and are "*hoping that some international organisation would come forward to collaborate with us*".

For further details and information contact: Irfan Husain, Field Director, Tiger Trust Society, 14 Civil Lines, Faizabad 224 001 (UP), India Tel: 91-5278-23872; E-mail: [aquiline@indiasite.com](mailto:aquiline@indiasite.com) or [cybercaf@1w1.vsnl.net.in](mailto:cybercaf@1w1.vsnl.net.in)

### • **Tiger cub deaths**

On 7 January 1999, newspapers reported the **death of two six-month-old tiger cubs**, "*apparently poisoned*", found near the Suhewala Wildlife Sanctuary. Chief Wildlife Warden, Mr. R.L. Singh was quoted as saying "*panicky villagers must have sprayed poisonous insecticide on the carcass of a goat and left it for the tigress and cubs*."

Nearly two months later, on 2 March 1999, newspapers reported that these same two tiger cubs were found dead of starvation in a state politician's farmhouse. Three people employed at the farmhouse were arrested and, according to the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWW), admitted that they had captured the cubs from a cave in the Suhewala Sanctuary and taken them to the farmhouse. In this report Mr. R.L. Singh, CWW, was quoted as saying "*We have found that it was not a natural death. The cubs had starved to death*." No explanation was presented for the total change in story. The farmhouse owner, a former Lok Sabha member of the Samajwadi Party, denies involvement and alleges that he "*was being framed by the state's BJP government*".

Either way, two more tigers have met their death.

Source: *The Telegraph* 7 Jan. 1999; *Times of India* 2 March 1999

### • **Arms licences cancelled**

On 21 March **Mr. Manoj Kumar Singh**, the District Magistrate, **Pilibhit** declared that all **licences for fire arms** issued to people alleged to be involved in killing wild animals will be **cancelled**. He has urged the DFO to send proposals with details in this context. **M.K. Singh** made the ruling in the context of an incident where four people from around Pilibhit area were ac-



### Shooting in Dudhwa

On 5 March 1999, Wildlife Guard, **Jitendra Singh** was killed while on patrol in **Dudhwa Tiger Reserve**. On 6/7 April 1999, another Dudhwa Wildlife Guard, **Gaya Prasad** was shot dead near the Chandan Chowki at the Nepalese border about 25 km from Dudhwa complex. The guard was apparently found with a bullet through his neck and a rifle by his side. While the police at the Gauri Phanti outpost suggest that the guard killed himself, activists are unconvinced and see the circumstances as "highly suspicious".

In another incident **park staff clashed with 500-600 encroachers** from the adjoining Kheri district. Apparently encouraged by political leaders, not only had the encroachers constructed temporary shelters, but they had also begun agricultural operations within the Park. In March 1999, the Deputy Director, Mr. Longhwa, and his staff resisted their efforts to further establish themselves. There was an exchange of fire, in which one **forest guard** was **badly wounded** and 2 illegal encroachers were shot. Apparently an F.I.R. (first information report) was filed against the forest officials and they had to leave the scene and get relief from the high court in Lucknow.

Source: Tiger Trust Society (India), Faizabad; Smt. Amar Kaur Jasbir Singh; U.P. Forest Dept.

cused of poaching two chital. He also stated that in future no fire arms will be issued to anyone from a village where any resident is reported to be involved in poaching.

Such a step by the district administration could bring appreciable improvement and other districts should be encouraged to emulate this sensible approach.

Source: Asar Fatima (Ex-President SATYA) c/o Kabir Ahmad, Asstt. Conservator of Forest, Pilibhit Tel: 42302

### West Bengal

#### • *Sundarbans tiger deaths*

On 29 August 1998, a male **tiger** was **killed by poison** at Hemnagar village in the Basirhat range of **Sundarbans Tiger Reserve**. Two days earlier the tiger had killed a cow belonging to the local school teacher, Girinda Nath Mondal. The Range Officer did not remove the carcass and the villagers put poison in it and thus killed the

tiger when he returned to feed on it during the following nights.

The **body of a 3 year old male tiger** was **recovered** from the river bank near Par-Ghumti village of the Basirhat Range on 5 March 1999. It appears that this too is a case of poisoning although this time the kill occurred inside the forest.

The local NGO, *Institute of Climbers and Nature Lovers* (ICNL) report that the situation in the Basirhat Range of the reserve is "virtually beyond control". "The Field Director is trying his best to take stock of the situation and had already transferred two Range Officers at short intervals as a remedial step. More staff and boats are required to be deployed in the Range without further delay."

Source: ICNL, 17 New Santoshpur Main Road, Santoshpur, Calcutta 700075 Tel: 4165994

#### • *Sundarbans tiger victims*

The tigers of the **Sundarbans Tiger Reserve** claim **five more victims**.

On 25 February, **Mangal Mondal** of Chargheri village was killed by a tiger while fishing from the river bank. His fellow fisherman chased the tiger and recovered the body. On 14 March, **Parulbala Mondal** was killed by a tiger at Gosaba when she was out fishing. Her body has also been recovered by other fisherman. On 25 March, **Kartik Mondal** of Meriganj village was fishing with six others in Gosaba area when attacked and severely wounded by a tiger. The injured Kartik died on the way to hospital in Canning.

Two honey-collectors, **Basudeb Roy** and **Gopal Mridha** of Jharkhali village, were killed by tigers on 11 April 1999 at Chandra Duani and Bhagaban Bharani respectively. Though the body of Gopal was recovered, Basudeb's is missing.

Man-eating is an old menace in the Sunderbans. In the 1970s an average of 48 people a year were killed by tigers. In 1983 the electrified dummy was introduced with excellent results. Along with electrified dummies the human face mask made of rubber was introduced which was a great success. The annual toll came down to 17 in 1988.

Both electrified dummy and face mask were discontinued from 1989 and man eating incidents again increased from 12 in 1989, to 43 in 1992 and 33 in 1993. After 1993 counteracting measures were again introduced. In 1994 only 7 persons were killed by tigers. The lowest ever was recorded in the year 1996 when only one person was killed. In 1997 a specially designed light protective

helmet was introduced by the present Field Director. Eight incidents were recorded in 1998.

In the last year, five women and a man have been killed by crocodiles in the Sundarbans area. Source: *Hindu*, New Delhi 27 Feb. 1999; *Telegraph*, Calcutta 16 March 1999; *Hindu* 28 March 1999; ICNL, 17 New Santoshpur Main Road, Calcutta 700075 Tel: 4165994; *West Bengal Report on Tiger*, by Mr. Pranabes Sanyal, Chief Environmental Officer, Govt. of West Bengal

### • *Timber gang attacks reserve*

Around 14,000 to 15,000 cubic metres of wood are believed to have been cut and smuggled out of Buxa Tiger Reserve by timber syndicates. The Forest Department referred the case to the vigilance commission when a spot verification by senior officials revealed the magnitude of the crime to be on such a huge scale. The officials had counted the stumps of felled trees in the reserve and, although a portion of the felled timber was later recovered from secret godowns near the reserve, *"the damage to the forest of such large-scale felling is irreparable"*.

The initial scam had involved about 315 cubic metres of wood valued at nearly Rs 75 lakh. It was detected after a forest official complained that timber merchants who had been given the contract to fell and purchase nearly 300 trees of a defence establishment in Hashimara near the Buxa reserve, had *"faked the documents in collusion with some forest staff to enter the sanctuary and smuggle teak and sal"*. Two forest staff have been suspended and the Coochbehar DFO transferred for his failure to check the smuggling.

Mrinal Chatterjee says, *"this is unprecedented and one of the worst*

*instances of corruption unearthed in the State. The underhand dealings were going on for the last couple of years with the powers that be seemingly unaware."*

Mr. Pranabes Sanyal, Chief Environmental Officer, Govt. of West Bengal reports that the estimate of last year's figure for **wood removal** from Buxa TR is as much as Rs 110 million (nearly **US\$ 2.6 million**).

Source: *The Telegraph*, Calcutta 16 March 1999; Mrinal Chatterjee, ICNL, Calcutta

## FIELD SUPPORT

In February 1999, the **Wildlife Protection Society of India**, under a project in its Tiger Protection Programme, donated an **elephant**, Sonakali, for anti-poaching work in **Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary**, part of Corbett Tiger Reserve. Funds for purchasing the elephant were provided by *Fund for the Tiger* (USA) and **Mrs. B. Horton** (USA).

**WPSI** provided funds, through a grant from *Fund for the Tiger*, towards vehicle and boat **fuel** expenses for anti-poaching patrols in **Kalagarh Forest Division** and **Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary**.

The **WWF-Tiger Conservation Programme** donated:

- **3 mechanised boats** and **Rs 50,000** for construction of boats to **Kaziranga National Park**;
- **4 fire fighting sets** and **5 motorcycles** to **Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary**;
- **1 mini-truck**, **1 inflatable boat**, **1 Gypsy**, **3 solar panels**, funds for construction of 3 chowkies, uniform and special clothing to **Nameri National Park**;
- **14 fire fighting sets**, **5 solar panels**, **1 tranquilliser gun** with accessories, uniforms for entire staff, funds for construction of chowkies and one refrigerator for storage of vaccines to **Biligiri Rangayyan Wildlife Sanctuary**;
- **3 mechanised boats**, **12 cycles** and **2 more motorcycles** to **Manas Tiger Reserve**;
- funds for cattle inoculation camps at **Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve** and **Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary**;
- **3 solar panels** to **Katerniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary**;
- **1 diesel jeep** to **Satkosia Wildlife Sanctuary**;
- **1 tranquilliser gun** with accessories to **Corbett National Park** and
- **2 solar panels**, **radio sets** and funds for 2 chowkies to **Pakhui WLS**.

### • *Tiger numbers*

After its tiger census in 1998, West Bengal arrived at a figure of **361 tigers** in the State (the 1997 figure was also 361). Out of this, 298 tigers were reported from Sunderdans and 31 tigers from the Buxa Tiger Reserve of north Bengal. (In 1997, the figures for the two tiger reserves were 263 and 32, respectively)

Source: *West Bengal Report on Tiger*, by Mr. Pranabes Sanyal, Chief Environmental Officer, Govt. of West Bengal



• **Conference to mark 25 years of P.T.**

A three-day international 'Millennium Tiger Conference' was held in New Delhi between 3–5 March 1999 to commemorate 25 years of Project Tiger. The conference was organised by the MoEF and attended by over 150 government and non-governmental experts from range, consumer and donor countries. In his inaugural address, the **Vice President Shri Krishan Kant** declared that "*the tiger is not only a symbol of our rich cultural heritage and biodiversity but represents the entire life sustaining resources essential for the survival of humans*". He expressed concern for the dwindling population of tigers and called for "*a new mental attitude*" towards tiger conservation and a "*global commitment to face all the challenges, resolve all problems and secure the future of the tiger*".

The **Union Minister for Environment and Forests, Shri Suresh Prabhu** noted that "*many of the threats originate outside our country*" and exhorted the G7 and other developed countries to come forward to help conserve the tiger and its habitat throughout its range. While acknowledging the initial success of Project Tiger, the Minister commented that we "*can't rest on past laurels*" and encouraged the conference to take stock of successes and failures. He laid stress on the need for special conservation efforts for areas falling outside the protected area network system and proposed adoption of "*a bio-regional approach to wildlife management*" and the identification and development of wildlife corridor habitats to broaden wildlife protection. He listed some of the actions in the MoEF pipeline, including establishing awards for field staff on the lines of the President's medal in the Police Department, covering forest staff with personal insurance policies and creating two new categories of protected areas—'conservation reserve' and 'community reserve'—"*so as not to unduly disadvantage communities*". He also announced that the Ministry would be setting up a separate sub-cadre for wildlife within the Indian Forest Service as well as a cadre for managing the zoos.

Over the next three days representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Malaysia, Nepal, Russia and Thailand presented their tiger scenarios and discussed individual country and collaborative strategies for conservation. Special sessions were held on transboundary issues and the means to improve regional cooperation for countries sharing common borders with protected areas that span them. Representatives and experts from CITES, the Environmental Investigation Agency, TRAFFIC-India and the Wildlife Protection Society of India were present to energize the discussions regarding poaching and trade of

tigers. Donor discussion centred around WWF International and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *Rhino and Tiger Fund* as the only major donors with representatives present.

The **Deputy Prime Minister of Britain, Mr. John Prescott**, addressed the conference at its conclusion, congratulating India for "*the pioneering work carried out for the last 25 years under Project Tiger*" but remarking that "*the plight of the tiger is, sadly, dire. We need new vision and more determined international co-operation to save this priceless and indeed sacred creature.*" (see also page 34)

After some discussion and expression of divergent views, particularly on the emphasis to give various factors, participants agreed on a **Millennium Tiger Declaration** in view of "*the serious crisis facing the tiger across Asia*" (see page 26).

Source: Millennium Tiger Conference press release; Millennium Tiger Declaration; U.K. DyPM address to MTC

• **Then and now—PT Director's address**

In his address to the Millennium Tiger Conference, the **Director of Project Tiger, Mr. P.K. Sen** compared the 1970s scenario, when Project Tiger began, with the situation prevailing now. He said that identified **tiger habitat has halved**—from 300,000 km<sup>2</sup> in 1971 to 150,000 km<sup>2</sup> in 1998. Over this period the **human population has increased by 80%** in and around protected areas and the **cattle population has more than doubled**. Mr. Sen reported the official **tiger** figures which increased from 1,827 in 1969 to 3,015 in 1979, 4,005 in 1984 to a peak of 4,334 in 1989. For 1993 the figure was given as 3,750 and in 1997 the conference was informed that "*the reported figure*" was 3,810 tigers.

"*India is a developing country and our priorities are many*", Mr. Sen said, while assuring the conference that effective tiger conservation is on India's national agenda and the intention is to bring a larger portion of the remaining tiger habitat within the tiger conservation programme in order to be able "*to maintain a viable population of 5000 to 6000 tigers within our protected area network.*" The Project Tiger Director listed some of the initiatives taken for tiger conservation and made an appeal to the global community to help strengthen India's efforts. He urged all countries to regard the tiger as a "*global heritage*" and to extend financial and logistic support—in particular he appealed to all countries "*to pursue major manufacturing and consuming countries to introduce stringent acts and laws to check the illegal trade in tiger parts and derivatives.*"

Source: Director PT's address to the Millennium Tiger Conference

## Millennium Tiger Conference Declaration

### Realising

That tiger is a symbol of biodiversity and has a right to live in inviolate habitats.

That the protection of the tiger and the conservation of biodiversity is a vital national, regional and global concern.

That the support of all governments of the world is essential for tiger conservation and, therefore, environmental and natural resource management policies of tiger range and non-range countries must be consistent with the spirit, requirement and goals of global tiger conservation.

That continuing co-operation between all tiger range countries is a necessary step for the better management of tiger habitats and transboundary initiatives for coordinated management are vital to the safety of tigers.

That the involvement of international conservation organisations, NGOs and the participation of local communities in conservation initiatives are essential to ensure the future of the tiger.

That scientific research projects and sharing of information are exceedingly important for the design of field strategies that will effectively manage population of wild tigers.

That education and awareness across the world is essential in dissuading consumer countries from using tiger products and derivatives.

### and considering

That because the distribution of tigers across its range spans a great diversity of bio-regions, including many biodiversity hot spots.

That its conservation in nature has proved to be a potent means of conserving a wide range of diversity.

That considerable habitat for tiger continues to be appropriated by mega-development projects of hydropower, irrigation, mining and the like and the pressure on residual habitats get compounded by the humans displaced by such development interventions.

That the impressive gains of special measures for tiger conservation initiated in the early 70s, particularly in the countries of South Asia, have lately come under threat from habitat shrinkage and degradation as well as from demand for tiger body parts and derivatives from countries outside the region.

That habitat degradation is resulting from excessive livestock grazing and other pressures of increased local population whose community resource base has also shrunk and degraded.

That considerable extent of tiger habitat in the range states lies outside the PA network in the 'production' forests which suffer such degradation not only from pressure of local people but also from forest management induced collection of NTFP.

That large investments are needed to conserve tiger by mitigating pressure on tiger habitat through

ecodevelopment, proper buffer zone management around PAs and participatory forestry management in forests outside PA network.

That as long as there is demand and legal as well as illegal availability of tiger parts and derivatives, it will be virtually impossible to control poaching of wild tigers.

### Recommends

That countries of the region that share international borders must co-operate in time bound programmes to manage both tiger populations and habitats in and outside transborder areas and other protected areas.

That all tiger range states strengthen regional co-operation by frequent meetings, exchange programmes, collaborative research and capacity building and share information with respect to the tiger.

That all countries across the world, which may not have tigers, join actively in the effort to save them by supporting tiger range countries with funds and other expertise.

That tiger range countries pursue innovative land use policies that recognise the vital importance of tiger habitats in the sustainable development of the country, thereby ensuring that large scale developmental projects with the potential to destroy tiger habitats are restrained and restricted.

That international donor agencies support innovative tiger conservation initiatives and fund programmes to discourage the use of tiger derivatives in traditional medicine, including finding renewable alternatives and encouraging interface between technical/scientific experts and user groups.

That national legislation in tiger range and other countries across the world be strengthened and enforced in order to eliminate poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its consumption in medicines and other derivatives. All countries of the world must enter into proper international conventions like CITES to ensure the elimination of this illegal trade.

That NGOs all over the world focus and intensify their campaigns and interventions to educate and increase public awareness, create political will, lobby for conservation and join hands to save the tiger on the eve of this millennium.

That the range countries supplement their contribution to tiger conservation by evolving mechanisms requiring PA revenues to be reinvested into tiger conservation.

That the model established by the US Rhinoceros and Tiger Labelling Act and the EU CITES Regulations be fully implemented and similar regulations be adopted in all other consumer countries.

That consumer countries immediately enact and rigorously enforce new and adequate legislation to ban import, export and sale of tiger parts and derivatives.



That effective mechanism for transboundary co-operation be ensured through: communication networking; exchange of information and expertise; training, research and capacity building; wildlife trade monitoring and control; compatible management plans for transboundary PAs for coordinated management and by fully utilising the existing facility of Wildlife Crime Subgroup of the Interpol.

That the role of media in generating public opinion is well recognised and this role needs to be discharged in a effective manner.

The tiger is one of the greatest indicators of the health of our ecological system and is symbolic of the natural treasure of planet earth. The natural heritage of this world and its protection and conservation is not only a vital concern for us today but will determine the quality of life for future generations of people. Saving wild tigers, therefore, is of vital international concern now and for the future.

**The Millennium Tiger Conference pledges on this day to ensure the future survival of the wild tiger.**

#### • *Forest staff under attack*

Almost every issue of *TigerLink News* carries tragic reports of forest department staff killed in the course of duty. Sadly this issue is no exception—men lost in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Orissa, U.P. *TigerLink* wrote in February 1999 to all State PCCFs in an attempt to determine just how many such deaths have occurred since 1990, in order to highlight the arduous, dedicated work of the field staff and the need for better training and equipment to combat the kind of assaults they have to deal with on a daily basis. Only three replies have been received.

**Mizoram:** a Game Watcher, Lalzawmliana, was shot in 1997 by unidentified persons while on anti-poaching patrol in the Dampha Tiger Reserve.

**Andhra Pradesh:** Forester, Shri T. Rana Pratap Singh died in June 1998 after being attacked by a bear while verifying the situation in an area with regard to 'tiger' attacks. The Asst. Director, Shri M.A. Waheed and a villager, Shri Govind Pulliah were also badly injured in the attack.

While thankfully the number is low in these two states, others have not fared so well. Unofficial figures from **Madhya Pradesh** reveal that between 1992 and 1998, **39 forest employees** were **killed** while on duty protecting the forests in the 'tiger state'.

**Stop Press:** As we went to press the reply from Mr. K.N. Singh, PCCF, U.P. arrived (see 'Open Forum'): In **Uttar Pradesh**, **53 forest staff** have been **killed** since 1 January 1990—5 or 6 every year. These include one ACF, 4 Range Officers, 2 Deputy Range

Officers, 4 Foresters, 20 Forest and Wildlife Guards and 10 daily wagers, among the other staff. Nine of the men are reported to have been killed by "militants" in forest areas, four died during fire-fighting operations, but most of the cases, where cause and culprits are known, relate to murders committed by forest offenders—mainly by those involved in tree-felling and timber smuggling.

We thank the PCCFs of Mizoram, A.P. and U.P. for responding and request other states to follow their example so that comprehensive information may be publicised.

#### • *NGO sponsors children*

'*Orphaned by Wildlife Fund*', a project by 'India Tiger Conservation Trust' has been started by Atul Kumar of Indiana, USA, to assist the minor children of forest staff and villagers killed by wildlife or in the cause of tiger conservation in the Tiger Reserves and National Parks of India. Phase I has apparently identified approximately 15 children at Corbett, Manas, Sariska and Dudhwa. Kumar reports that the Fund is "*working closely*" with the Wildlife Protection Society of India.

Contact: Atul Kumar, 2709 Quinn Place, Dyer, Indiana 46311, USA Tel: 219-322-6461 Fax: 219-865-9862 E-mail: atulkumar@prodigy.net

#### • *Forest staff insurance schemes*

A number of NGOs have financed insurance schemes for forest guards and particularly for the Forest Department daily wage staff, such as "watchers".

The *Nilgiri Wildlife and Environment Association* has taken out the Janata Insurance Scheme of the New India Assurance Co. Ltd. for tribal watchers in **Mudumalai** and **Mukurthi N.P.s**. This pays benefits in case of accident or death (see *TL News* Jan '99). Initially subscribed for a one year period, the cost per person is Rs 50 for maximum benefit of Rs 1,00,000. No claims have been made so far.

The *Karnataka Tiger Conservation Project* has covered 253 temporary forest watchers in their four project areas (**Nagarahole, Bandipur, Kudremukh and Bhadra**) through the Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. Each watcher is insured for Rs 1.5 lakh in case of death or disablement. In addition to this, medical expenses up to Rs 75,000 for treatment of injuries resulting in disablement are also provided.

After group discounts, the individual policy premium amounts to Rs 197 per year.

*Tiger Watch* is also financing a scheme under the "Janata Personal Accident Policy" of the New India

Assurance Co. that covers 196 permanent staff members of the **Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve** and are working on a scheme to cover the entire staff. The sum insured per person is Rs 4,00,000 for 3 years covering death and disabilities (total Rs 59,976). With special group discount and government employee discount, the premium per person for the three years is a total of Rs 306. The insurance was taken out on 29 January 1999 and only one month later Forest Guard, Shri Sukhvair Singh was run over by a truck at the Bodal check post. Efforts are on to secure release of compensation due under the scheme.

Source: NWEA, c/o Dist. Forest Office (North Div.), Mount Stewart Hill, Udthagamandalam 643001, Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu; *Wildlife First!* 248, 4th Main Road, Chanarajapet, Bangalore 560018; *Tiger Watch*, 16 & 17 Hansraj Damodar Bldg., 12/14 Goa Street, Ballard Estate, Mumbai 400001

#### • **Cat group field meet**

The first **South Asian Cat Specialist Group** meeting under the chair of Valmik Thapar was held in **Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve** between 17 and 22 April 1999. Fifteen members participated including the Chairman of the Cat Specialist Group, Mr. Peter Jackson. This was primarily a field meeting and members were able to view five different leopards, five different tigers and one jungle cat. Unfortunately the caracal remained invisible. Shri S.C. Sharma, Additional I.G. Forest (Wildlife) from the MoEF also attended the meeting. Members were treated to open air presentations on the Asiatic cheetah in Iran, the Panna Tiger Project and information on the snow leopard. Most of one day was also spent in intensive field interaction with twenty Range Officers of the region with a field exercise on methodology for estimation of animal populations. All in all a very useful field exercise was held.

Source: Valmik Thapar

#### • **Industries and PAs**

The government has framed **new rules** for industries proposing to set up close to cities, wetlands, national parks and sanctuaries, biosphere reserves, archaeological monuments etc. The rules are said to be a "*radical overhaul*" of the existing 'Siting Rules of 1985' as they have been made more stringent "*to meet the needs of environment protection*". Drafted by the MoEF, the file has been sent to the Law Ministry for vetting.

Under the new rules, units of the 29 categories of **industry** for which environment impact assessments are mandatory will **not be allowed within 7 km of**

notified wetlands, national parks and sanctuaries and core zones of biosphere reserves. In a belt between 7 and 25 km from the PAs, permission will only be granted if, on assessment, it is found that the activities will not impair the environmental interest.

In the past, Project Tiger Steering Committee has recommended 20 km as the distance from Tiger Reserves within which certain industries should not be sited.

Source: S.P. Sagar, *Business Standard* 3 Sept. 1998

#### • **Public hearings before F(C)A clearances**

The MoEF is making **public hearings mandatory** before deciding on clearances for any project involving more than 20 acres of forest land. The order has been given by the Minister, Shri Suresh Prabhu who believes there is a need for more openness in such decisions.

Source: *The Times of India* 9 April 1999

#### • **Forest for dams?**

**Madhya Pradesh** has the highest loss of forest cover of all the states—3,969 km<sup>2</sup> diverted in the two years from 1995 to 1997, accounting for 60% of India's total loss of forest cover. Since independence, M.P. has lost more than 24% of its then forest cover. After agriculture, dam projects accounted for the main cause of diversion. Fifty years on, little has changed.

The **Narmada Valley Development Plan (NVDP)** in M.P. is the single largest river valley project in India and envisages the building of no less than 30 major dams, 135 medium and nearly 3,000 minor dams along the Narmada river and her tributaries. If implemented, **4,000 km<sup>2</sup> of natural forest will be submerged or lost** to canals and other dam related work through this one project! 6,000 km<sup>2</sup> of agricultural and grazing land will also be lost, resulting in severe biotic pressure on even more forest areas.

The **Narmada Sagar Project (NSP)**, "*the most destructive of the major dams*", will submerge **400 km<sup>2</sup> of forest** and another **20 km<sup>2</sup> of forest** has been **clearfelled** for the powerhouse, roads, colonies, office buildings and canals. These forests support about 30 species of mammals, including tiger and leopard, 209 bird species and a variety of fish and other aquatic wildlife. Besides, as the W.I.I. Impact Assessment study records, the "*area under proposed submergence is a vast source of medicinal plants*". The forest due for submergence is generally of a higher quality than that in the adjoining areas so the "*dam would lead to a substantial loss of optimal wildlife habitat*". The NSP, approved by the Prime



Minister in 1987, was given conditional clearance by the MoEF in the same year but most of the conditions on which clearance was given, including rehabilitation and compensatory afforestation, have been violated by the Project authorities. **254 villages** are due to be submerged by the reservoir but the actual number of people whose lives and livelihoods will be affected by this project is estimated to be closer to 7 lakh. One estimate of the number of affected people for the whole NVDP is around 7 million, including 3 million affected due to submergence. The displacement and cultural upheaval of so many is unimaginable. And the impact on even more areas of forest and tiger habitat, would be inevitable.

As Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) point out, "there are sustainable alternatives which can meet the irrigation and energy needs of the people without submerging such vast areas of field and forest and displacing such a large number of people." Several studies have been done that show that small and medium hydro projects can "more than match the planned power potential of the major schemes" and that small scale water harvesting schemes in Gujarat could easily collect "an amount 50% higher than the water supposed to be delivered through the canals of the Sardar Sarovar Project".

In 'The Greater Common Good, Arundhati Roy writes, "The war for the Narmada Valley is not just some exotic tribal war or a remote rural war or even an exclusively Indian war. It's a war for the rivers and the mountains and the forests of the world."

United opposition is essential to fight this obsolete and devastatingly destructive plan.

Source: Report by Ramesh Billorey, NBA c/o Vijaya Parashar, 'Padawa', Khandwa, M.P.; 'Impact Assessment Studies of Narmada Sagar and Omkareshwar Projects on Flora and Fauna with Attendant Human Aspects' Wildlife Institute of India publication 1994

#### • **India pays the World Bank**

"Today, India is in a situation where it pays back more money to the Bank in interest and repayment instalments than it receives from it...According to the World Bank Annual Report, last year (1998), after the arithmetic, **India paid the Bank 478 million dollars more than it received.** over the last five years (1993-1998) India paid the Bank US\$ 1.475 billion more than it received."

From: 'The Greater Common Good' by Arundhati Roy in *Outlook* 24 May 1999 and *Frontline* 4 June 1999

#### • **Forest land diversion guidelines**

In a letter issued in December 1998, the Asstt. Inspector General of Forests informed all PCCFs, Chief Wildlife Wardens and nodal officers of all States and Union Territories of the Ministry of Environment and Forests' decision **not to permit development activities inside National Parks and Sanctuaries and Tiger Reserve areas.** The Asstt. I.G. Forests stated:

*"This Ministry has been receiving proposals from various States and Union Territories for permission to use forest land for non-forestry uses even in such areas. It is suggested that States and U.T.s should avoid recommending use of forest areas inside sanctuaries, national parks and project tiger areas for non-forest purposes. Wherever it is inescapable, the State Government is advised first to get consent of the Indian Board for Wildlife for getting approval of the State Legislature for denotification of the concerned Board, the proposal under F(C) Act, 1980 may be submitted to Central Government for consideration. The proposals which are received without the approval as mentioned above shall not be considered for clearance under F(C) Act."*

The letter also requests "specific comments" of the Chief Wildlife Warden where proposals are submitted in respect of other wildlife-rich areas and for forests which form "corridors for movement/migration of wild animals".

Source: Ministry letter no. 11-9/98-FC dated 4/12/98 on MoEF website: [www.nic.in/envfor](http://www.nic.in/envfor)

#### **"Rationalising" PA boundaries?**

In line with the Supreme Court directive, the process of **settlement of people's rights** in order to complete notification of Protected Areas is continuing. In the process it would seem that a number of areas are threatened by partial '**denotification**'. For a variety of reasons, Settlement Officers are proposing to exclude areas from the boundary of the park or sanctuary. Semarsot and Tamor Pingla Sanctuaries and Madhav N.P. (see News from the States) in M.P., and Koyna Sanctuary in Maharashtra are reported to be among those threatened in this way.

**Kalpavriksh** are **collating information** regarding this threat so that it can be used for a national campaign to halt this "dangerous trend". Participants aware of any PA in their area where partial or total 'denotification'/deletion is proposed should immediately send details to:

Ashish Kothari/Pankaj Sekhsaria, *Kalpavriksh*, Apt. 5, Shree Dutta Krupa, 908 Deccan Gymkhana, Pune 411004 Tel/fax: (020) 5654239 E-mail [ashish@nda.vsnl.net.in](mailto:ashish@nda.vsnl.net.in)

## • WWF-Tiger Conservation Programme

Support from WWF-TCP to all **first phase** tiger areas (Corbett, Dudhwa, Manas, Bandhavgarh, Periyar, Kaziranga and Palamau) has already reached. **Reports are awaited** on the first assessment of these areas after the support started. Assistance to areas selected for support in the **second phase** is also **almost complete**. Four new areas (Namdapha TR, Sundarbans TR, Orang WLS and Kalakad-Mudanthurai TR) have been selected for WWF-TCP support.

Between January 1998 and April 1999, the WWF-TCP **cattle compensation scheme** has provided Rs 1,046,000 (approx. US\$ 25,500) of which **Rs 782,697** (\$ 19,000) have been **utilised** in compensating a total of **864 cattle kills**, as follows:

Area	Rs. provided	Rs. utilised	No. kills compensated
Corbett T.R.	656,000	572,795	697
Dudhwa T.R.	150,000	47,795	17
Palamau T.R.	175,000	133,802	118
Andhra Pradesh (5 PAs)	40,000	3,400	27
Ranthambhore T.R.	25,000	7,100	5

Source: *Tiger Update* April 1999

## • Consultative meet

The third *National Consultation on Wildlife Conservation and People's Livelihood Rights* was held between the 1-3 May in Bhopal. The objective of the consultation was to provide a forum for constructive interaction among forest officers, NGOs, social activists, local community representatives, conservation researchers and media-persons.

**Commercial and development** threats were identified by the meeting as one of the **biggest threats** to local communities and wildlife—amendments need to be made to mining policy and the Mining and Minerals Act to keep ecologically and culturally sensitive areas completely inviolate. Diversion of roads and train routes are required to avoid accidents involving wildlife as seen in recent years in Dudhwa and Rajaji NP.

The meeting was divided on the issue of **tourism**. While some completely opposed it, others were of

the view that it should be environmentally and culturally sensitive and a substantial portion of the revenue generated should go back to the PA and local community.

Concern was also expressed about **poaching** and it was felt that joint anti-poaching measures involving local people, forest officials and NGO representatives should be considered.

In the matter of **settlement of rights** of people inside and around PAs, the participants felt that there was need for conduct guidelines so that denotification can be minimised and customary rights of people can be properly recorded and established. It was also felt that **compensation for loss of life** of humans or livestock by wild animal needed to be increased.

Many participants expressed concern that the State Forestry Projects, especially the Madhya Pradesh **Forestry Project**, are leading to commercialisation and privatisation of forest and leading to a loss of local livelihood securities and loss of biodiversity. Such projects should be opposed and alternatives involving people and avoiding the need for large-scale external funding, need to be explored.

Source: Gautam Bandopadhyaya, *Ekta Parishad*, O/3, Anupam Nagar, P.O. Shankar Nagar, Raipur, M.P.; Tel/Fax: 0771-421926; Ashish Kothari, *Kalpavriksh*, Apt. 5 Shree Dutta Krupa, 908 Deccan Gymkhana, Pune 411004 Tel/Fax: 020-354239; E-mail: ashish@nda.vsnl.net.in

## • Mining act changes

In March 1999, the Union Cabinet took a decision to **devolve** to the States some of its **powers** with regard **to monitoring** the **mining industry**. It was proposed that full powers on the grant of concessions for mineral limestone would be bestowed on the States. The States would also be given the power to renew mining leases "*beyond first renewal*" and they would be granted more powers and authority to check and search to curb illegal mining. "*The States would also be authorised to approve mining plans in respect of certain non-metallic and industrial minerals, granting of mining lease, prospecting licence for areas which are not compact of contiguous.*"

It is not known how the fall of the government will affect these decisions.

Source: *Hindustan Times* 31/3/99



## Bangladesh

### • World Heritage Site 'unveiled'

On 4 February 1999 Bangladesh's Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina formally unveiled the World Heritage Site plaque at Heron Point of the Sunderbans. In December 1997, UNESCO had included 1,400 km<sup>2</sup> of the 6,017 km<sup>2</sup> **Bangladesh Sunderbans** area on the **World Heritage list** for its outstanding natural value and the Bangladesh Government declared the area a World Heritage Site in the same month. (The Indian Sunderbans was included as a World Heritage Site in 1985.)

Sheikh Hasina announced that a **US\$ 82 million** project for the **conservation of the biodiversity** of the Sunderbans had been approved, financed partly by a loan from the Asian Development Bank and also by grants from donor agencies such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF). She said that the beautiful Sunderbans is a "*wonder of nature*" and the main source of income for a lot of coastal people. She also pointed out that "*the forest had saved the people from cyclones time and again*". The "**Biodiversity Conservation Project**" aims to develop a conservation system for all the resources that are extracted from the Sunderbans, to strengthen the Forest Department and to help the 3.5 million people dependent on the Sunderbans for their livelihood.

Source: Dhaka 5 Feb. 1999; the Star 19 March 1999

### • Sunderbans plundered

In spite of the '*Biodiversity Conservation Project*', local conservationists are not unduly optimistic. The Sunderbans area is beset with **many problems** and it remains to be seen how high the Bangladesh Government's level of commitment is and whether they "*will be able to forego short-term economic gains for the sole cause of conservation*". Official figures show that 45% of the country's total timber and fuelwood comes from the Sunderbans and the current annual revenue generated for the government alone comes to nearly \$ 4.4 million.

"*Over-harvesting and top-dying has caused a staggering 76% decline in the number of sunderi trees from which the forests get their name.*" **Illegal logging** is reported to be a daily affair and undertaken on a large and well-organised scale allegedly involving government officials also. Legal extraction of *golpatta* (*Nypa fruticans*) is also used as a means to smuggle out timber. **Over-fishing** is also becoming a major concern and fishermen are resorting to 'poison fishing' to compete for their catch. The Environment

Management Division (EMD) is said to be desperately **understaffed** and **under-equipped**. The 24 wildlife guards for the 3 sanctuaries have only ten .303 rifles between them. Besides their outmoded arms, they are also less mobile than the 'outlaws' and 'dacoits' and thus tend to restrict their patrolling to relatively "*less dangerous*" areas. The **dacoits** that find sanctuary in the forest live on the wildlife and make their living through kidnapping and ransom.

Professional and non-professional poachers are reported to hunt animals indiscriminately in the Sunderbans. The number of **tigers** is said to be **declining** there and organised gangs of hunters are actively killing tiger to collect skins, heads, nails and teeth for smuggling out of the country. According to "*a reliable source*" quoted in the media, the following are **tiger part seizures**: 1989, 3 skins; 1990, 8 skins and a large number of teeth; 1991, four skins and 1992, 4 skins.

Added to all this is the fact that **no extensive scientific research** has been done in the Sunderbans, "*so we don't even understand it as well as we would like to*". Conservationists are questioning whether the cycle of destruction can be reversed fast enough to preserve an ecosystem whose full scope is yet to be understood.

Source: Mahtab Haider, Morshed Ali Khan, *Star*, Dhaka 19 March 1999; Dhaka 5 March 1999

### • Tigers on film

It is reported that Sunderbans tigers in Bangladesh have been captured on film by *Cicada Films* of the U.K. while they were shooting a programme for Discovery on the work of a British researcher, Tessa McGregor. Earlier this year, with the help of cattle carcasses as bait, *Cicada* apparently obtained more than one hour's footage on video. They also set up Trail Master camera traps and photographed several different tigers.

Source: Ian Lockwood <ilockwood@ais-dhaka.net>

## Bhutan

### • Bhutan tigers

Seventy-two per cent of Bhutan is under forest cover. 10,500 km<sup>2</sup> representing 26% of the country comes under the Protected Area network although the stated aim is to protect 60% of the area. A recently completed tiger survey revealed **115-150 tigers** in the country, in habitats ranging from 200 m in the south to 4200 m in the north.

Source: Mr. Nado Rinchen, Programme Officer in charge of Wildlife: speech to Millennium Tiger Conference, March 1999

## Cambodia

### • *Land-mine use against tigers*

"Villagers and soldiers in the remote forests of **northeastern Cambodia** are resorting to the use of **land mines to catch and kill tigers for** the lucrative trade in animal tonics. The Governor of Ratanakiri province told reporters that businessmen who buy dead animals for their body parts are supplying the locals with gunpowder for the mines."

Source: San Francisco Chronicle 30 Jan. 1999 sent by Brian Weirum, jaibagh@aol.com

## China

### • *South China tigers*

There are estimated to be less than 30 South China (Amoy) tiger, *Panthera tigris amoyensis* remaining in the wild. Twenty-two Chinese zoos hold 56 captive animals of this subspecies. It is reported that even these are threatened as they are apparently suffering from malnutrition due to an inappropriate diet. This, combined with inbreeding and poor caging, is lowering their fertility rate and damaging their health. A study of eight male tigers in 1997 showed that two could not produce any semen, one has inactive sperm and most of the other five have lower sperm qualities than normal. China has now established a special committee to co-ordinate protective measures and has established a gene bank for the South China tiger in Shanghai.

Source: article by Zhang Feng 22/1/99, translated and sent by Wen Bo

### • *Less than 20 Siberian tigers in China*

Between 16 January 1999 and 31 March 1999 a joint **investigation** by wildlife experts from China, the United States and Russia was carried out to ascertain the status of the **Siberian tiger in China**. Major habitats in Heilongjiang and Jilin provinces were covered and it is reported that Siberian tiger numbers have dropped to **below 20** individuals—only 5–8 in Heilongjiang and about 10 in neighbouring Jilin province. Their scarcity is attributed to "*deteriorating environmental conditions*".

Source: *China Daily* 13 April 1999 (sent by Wen Bo)

## Java

### • *Javan tiger prematurely 'extinct'?*

A weekly magazine published in Indonesia, '*Tempo*', reports that **Javan tigers** may still exist! The

magazine quotes Wayhu Giri P., a naturalist: "*at the very least there are five individuals*". Wayhu is identified as a member of a team who found footprints, claw marks and scats in the 58,000 hectare **Meru Betiri National Park** on the island of Java. The article also quotes Indra Arinal, the "Head" of the Park as asserting that "*sightings by locals prove that the Javan tiger is indeed still around*". Apparently a sample scat has been sent to the U.S.A. for DNA analysis although the article does not mention specifically where.

However conservationists remain sceptical. The prey base in the park is believed to be too low to support a tiger population and internationally, the Javan subspecies, *Panthera tigris sondaica*, has been regarded as extinct since the 1980s. Local NGOs are reportedly angry that the Javan tiger should be classified as extinct and as a compromise Dr. Ron Tilson of the Sumatran Tiger Project has agreed to provide assistance in the form of camera traps to help confirm their status one way or another.

Earlier reports of Javan tigers fleeing the forest fires in 1997 were found by wildlife officials to be incorrect and the sightings were in fact of leopards (see *TL News* vol.3 no.1 Dec. 1997).

Source: '*Tempo*' magazine, Jan. 12–18 1999. Website: [www.tempo.co.id](http://www.tempo.co.id); WWF-Indonesia

## Nepal

### • *Woman killed by tiger*

On the night of 1 April 1999 a **tiger** entered Shilobas village in southern Nepal, lying in the **buffer zone of the Royal Chitwan National Park**. It is reported to have repeatedly circled and scratched the walls of a hut which contained buffalo meat before moving off and **killing Sheela Kumari** who was sleeping on a cot outside her home. The tiger fed on her upper body.

In the evening of the following day, the tiger apparently returned and attacked a woman in the adjoining house but it was scared off by other villagers before any fatal blow was inflicted.

On the morning of 4 April the tiger attacked a bull tied in the village. Though it was unable to kill it immediately, the bull died later that day from the wound to the neck and at night the tiger returned to feed. When the tiger returned again on 5 April, Forest Officials were waiting and the tiger was **tranquillised** and transported to Kathmandu zoo.

Apparently, one month earlier a similar incident had occurred in a village about 10 km east of



Shilobas. The tiger, which had reportedly killed two people, was poisoned and buried on the spot.

Source: Brian K. Weirum, P.O. Box. 2, Woodacre, California 94973 E-mail: jaibagh@aol.com

• **Transboundary meeting**

A two day transboundary meeting between **India and Nepal** was held at the end of February 1999, sponsored by the WWF-Tiger Conservation Programme. As part of the collaborative effort, both sides have agreed to create eco-corridors to facilitate animal migration by linking protected areas on either side of the border. It was agreed to set up and maintain linkages between Royal Bardia National Park in Nepal and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh; a similar "eco-corridor" will be maintained between Nepal's Chitwan National Park and Valmiki National Park in Bihar. Ways to reduce poaching and wildlife trade were also discussed. The bilateral co-operation includes establishment of a communication system between trans-border protected area managers—acquiring wireless sets with a common frequency is one of the issues being looked into. It was also decided to synchronise enumeration of wildlife, particularly of tigers, for a more realistic estimation of animals in the border areas.

This was the second such meeting between Nepal and India. The first was held in Kathmandu in 1997. Source: *Assam Tribune* 4 March 1999; *Tiger Update* April 1999

**Russian Far East**

• **Russian tiger poaching seizures**

**Operation Amba**, Russia's "Department Tiger", continues to make breakthroughs in the poaching and trade of the Russian Far East.

17 November 1998: Amba and the municipal Police Department of Ussurisk confiscated a set of tiger bones from two Chinese citizens.

30 November 1998: another set of tiger bones confiscated from a Chinese citizen.

24 December 1998: Amba helps customs officials seize skeletons of 3 tigers, 19 musk deer carcasses amongst other items.

9 February 1999: Amba helps lead Customs to Chinese citizen travelling from Russia to China with gall bladders and 7 bones presumed to be tiger.

Source: *Wildlife Matters*, David Shepherd Conservation Foundation newsletter, 61 Smithbrook Kilns, Cranleigh, Surrey GU6 8JJ, U.K. Tel: (01483) 272323 Fax: 272427; E-mail: dscf@dscf.demon.co.uk

**Switzerland**

• **WWF funding**

Established in 1961, WWF has a global network "active in 96 countries" and 4.7 million supporters worldwide who are "the organization's backbone, through their donations, legacies and annual subscriptions." The WWF network's income for 1998 was US\$ 320 million, 48% of which came from individuals, 20% from governments and aid agencies, 11% from earned income, the rest from trusts and foundations (7%), legacies (6%), corporations (3%), licensing (3%) and other (2%).

**Expenditure** for the period was US\$ 278 million, 44% of which is international and 56% national. 38%, or nearly \$41 million, was spent on WWF's "international conservation programme", 15% went towards "costs of conservation activities of WWF national organisations within their own territory." 7% goes on the administration of national organisations and 0.5% on international administrations; 13.7% goes on fund-raising (national 13%, international 0.7%). The total for administration and fund-raising is nearly \$59 million.

At the Millennium Tiger Conference, Chris Hailes of WWF International informed the meeting that the **WWF committed budget for tigers in 1998 was \$ 8.4 million** (only approximately 3% of total expenditure). **South Asia, holding approximately 61% of the world's wild tigers, received \$ 800,000** for the three year period 1997-99—only 9.5% of one year's budget! Figures for where and to whom the remaining millions went, were unavailable from WWF, although it is known that WWF has specific projects in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos, Russia, Thailand, Vietnam and also in Taiwan, as well as supporting the TRAFFIC network. (It would also be interesting to know how many WWF campaigns use the tiger for fund-raising and how much of WWF's income is raised on the strength of the tiger—surely more than 3%?)

In January 1998 WWF and IUCN set up a **Tiger Emergency Fund** to provide small grants (maximum \$ 10,000) for urgent and unforeseen threats, such as for fighting the fire that engulfed Siberian tiger habitat earlier in 1998. (See *TL News* vol.4 no.2 Sept. 1999). (See enclosed leaflet.)

Requests for WWF funding should be addressed to the WWF National Office or, if none, to WWF International.

WWF-India, 172-B Lodi Road, PO Box 3058, New Delhi 110003; tel: 91 11 469 3744.

## International News

WWF International, Avenue de Mont Blanc, 1196 Gland, Switzerland; tel: 41 22 364 91 11  
Source: WWF Annual Report 1998; *Tiger: status report*, WWF-UK 1998; Millennium Tiger Conference

### U.K.

#### • *U.K. leads tiger missions*

Fourteen international missions to tiger range and consumer states are scheduled to take place and report before the next meeting of the CITES Standing Committee in September 1999. U.K. is presently chair of the Standing Committee and the first technical mission was launched there on 20 January 1999.

*"The missions aim to:*

- *respond to mounting global concern about the fate of the tiger;*
- *encourage efforts to prevent poaching;*
- *prevent the illegal trade in tiger products; and*
- *to identify and encourage best practise in legislation and enforcement."*

The CITES technical mission is due to visit India on 28 May 1999.

The U.K. campaign to stop the poaching of, and illegal trade in, tigers was launched by the Environment Minister, Mr. Michael Meacher and Mr. Derek Fatchett, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, who spoke of the need for *"strong international controls...to be backed by strict domestic measures."* Mr Meacher spoke of the U.K. being *"at the forefront of countries outside the natural range of these animals to tackle illegal trade in their body parts"* and called on those countries that do not prohibit the domestic sale of tiger parts to do so.

The U.K. had launched "Operation Charm" in February 1995 in their effort to crack down on the illegal trade in endangered species (see TL News vol.4 no. 1 April 1998). Since then, raids carried out by the Police Forces in London, Birmingham and Manchester, have netted hundreds of products containing tiger derivatives. The results of this effort began to show—in a survey of 14 pharmacies in London, Glasgow and Edinburgh, the Environmental Investigation Agency in October/November 1997 *"failed to find any tiger products for sale"*.

At the Millennium Tiger Conference in March 1999, the U.K. Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. John Prescott, announced his Government's intention to be the first non-range state to join the Global Tiger Forum. He also announced a further grant of US\$ 80,000 from his department to *21st Century Tiger*, although already earmarked—half to support the

work of the *Wildlife Protection Society* of India and half to go as a matching fund to *Fauna and Flora International* for a new project in Indonesia to help save the Sumatran tiger.

On his return to the U.K., a Parliamentary Question was asked in the House of Commons concerning the future of the tiger and the steps India was taking to protect them. In his reply Mr. Prescott said that he was *"impressed by the clear commitment to tiger conservation shown by the Indian Government and in particular by Suresh Prabhu, the Indian Environment Minister, and Director of Project Tiger, Mr. P.K. Sen"* but that *"tigers in India still face serious threats"*.

Source: News Release 20 Jan. 1999; EIA's report: *The State of the Tiger: India's tiger crisis*; DPM address to Millennium Tiger Conference 5 March 1999; *Hansard* 18 March 1999

#### • *Art for wildlife*

On 28 April 1999 the first *Art for Survival of Wildlife* auction was held at Christie's, a leading auction house in South Kensington, London. Organised by the *David Shepherd Conservation Foundation* (DSCF), artist David Shepherd was joined by many other well-known artists who donated more than 60 original works for sale in the auction. This included five works from artists of the Ranthambhore School of Art—M.D. Parashar, Ram Prakash Kumawat, Pappu Lal Kumawat and Narayan Singh.

The auction far exceeded its target of £ 75,000; **£ 208,000 was raised for wildlife** and specifically for tigers, rhinoceros and elephants across the world. An audience of over 400 people who had also paid to attend the sale, bought all the items, many at well over their reserve prices. For this auction, as their contribution to the cause, Christie's generously waived their usual fees and commissions. Before the sale, brief talks were given by Valmik Thapar, Blythe Loutit from Namibia and David Shepherd on tiger, rhino and elephants respectively.

Valmik Thapar says, *"this resounding success can be duplicated by other creative disciplines, be it sculpting, textiles, design, music etc."*

Source: DSCF, 61 Smithbrook Kilns, Cranleigh, Surrey GU6 8JJ  
Fax: (01483) 272427 E-mail: dscf@dscf.demon.co.uk

### U.S.

#### • *Rhino/Tiger Fund invite proposals*

The **Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund** has recently sent out their latest request for proposals for the year 2000. The programme *"supports projects which develop local ability to manage, conserve and*



research the rhinoceros and tiger through provision of funding, training and equipment." (See *TL News* vol.3 no.1 June 1997.)

Proposals, in English, are invited from federal, state and local government agencies, NGOs and public and private institutions of higher education or any other entity. Funding is for one year or less and preference will be given to those requesting \$ 30,000 or less although higher amounts may be requested. Proposals "must have the support of the local government/s and have matching funds (cash) or in-kind support (salaries, equipment etc.) provided by the organisation receiving the grant or other partners."

According to the 'Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act Summary Report', US\$ 970,000 has been dispersed against US\$ 1,748, 616 matching funds and in-kind contributions (m.f.). Projects approved and being funded in India include:

US\$ 14,420 (\$ 13,580 m.f.) to *The Green's Movement* for awareness and conservation education in Assam;

US\$ 30,000 (\$ 41,584 m.f.) to *Wildlife Area Development and Welfare Trust* (Assam) for construction of 10 permanent patrol camps on the edge of Kaziranga National Park;

US\$ 19,730 (\$ 21,012 m.f.) to the Forest Department of Assam for gathering information on trade and poaching and assistance in organising prosecution of such cases;

US\$ 55,467 to the *Rhino Foundation for Nature in North East India*—\$ 34,060 (\$ 40,386 m.f.) for raincoats, jerseys, boots and haversacks and \$ 21,407 (\$ 44,635 m.f.) for communications equipment, both for Assam Forest Guards;

US\$ 66,640 to the *Wildlife Protection Society of India*—\$ 18,900 (\$ 45,060 m.f.) "to strengthen smaller NGOs near Indian tiger habitats so they can help protect the tiger in the field", \$ 30,900 (\$ 65,783 m.f.) for documentation and monitoring of tiger poaching and trade and \$ 16,840 (\$ 18,000 m.f.) for workshops for law enforcement authorities in six states "to advance detection and prevention of illegal wildlife trade".

New proposals should be postmarked by **15 July 1999**. Proposal review and processing may require up to 6 months.

Details from, and proposal submissions to: Chief, Office of International Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, ARLSQ 730, Arlington, VA 22203-1622, USA. Tel: 703-358-1754; fax: 703-358-2849; E-mail: fred\_bagley@mail.fws.gov

• **STF joins hands with tiger performers**

*Save the Tiger Fund*, an international programme established by Exxon and the National Fish and

Wildlife Foundation, has **linked itself with Siegfried and Roy**. "Among the most popular acts in Las Vegas, Siegfried and Roy are famous for incorporating white tigers into their magic show." They claim that the white tigers are so highly endangered that they merit the aggressive breeding programme that Siegfried and Roy have launched for them. (White tigers occur as a result of spontaneous genetic anomaly and can be produced from two orange parents—they are not a separate race. They cannot be considered "extinct-in-the-wild" as Siegfried and Roy claim).

Cory Meacham, author of 'How the Tiger Lost its Stripes', says "white tigers are a dangerous tool for anyone to be using in any effort towards serious tiger conservation". The danger, he explains, lies in sending a mixed message to the public, confusing them with such "double standards" that they may "tune out when it comes to hearing about tiger conservation."

Many leading tiger conservationists, including Valmik Thapar, Chairman of the South Asian Cat Specialist Group, are shocked that such partnerships are being struck with those that exploit tiger for their performance value and have written to John Seidensticker, chair of STF, to express their views.

Source: Invitation to the 20 May 1999 launch of "a new partnership for tiger conservation" from S. and R.; Cory Meacham <75570.1424@compuserve.com>

• **Tiger products still available in U.S.A**

The new 'Rhino and Tiger Labelling Act' appears to have made no immediate difference to the availability of medicines containing or claiming to contain tiger parts. In a survey conducted between 17 and 19 April 1999, the **Environmental Investigation Agency** investigators found that in a random 47 Chinese pharmacies, herbalists and general stores in New York's Chinatown District, **63%** (30 shops) **still offered tiger parts or products** containing, or claiming to contain, tiger parts. The EIA investigators found that there was increased awareness of the illegal nature of these products. They also found that some packaging had been changed to remove the exact Chinese character for 'tiger' but most of those questioned said that the product remained the same. The Tong Ren Tang Company in Beijing, where manufacture of these products is illegal, was one of the identified sources of some of the products.

Source: EIA Investigation report—the availability of tiger parts and products in New York's China Town EIA, 69 Old Street, London EC1V 9HX, U.K.; Tel: (0171) 490 7040 Fax: 490 0436 E-mail: eiauk@gn.apc.org

# Anti-poaching and Wildlife Trade

## • *WPSI records of poaching and seizures in brief*

17 November 1998: **2 leopard skins seized** in Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi by the Special Cell, Delhi Police. 1 arrest.\*

5 December 1998: **1 tiger skin seized** by police near Bijnore, Kotewali Dist., U.P. 1 arrest.\*

7 December 1998: **2 tiger skins seized** by police in Nekpur, near Bareilly, U.P. The offender was arrested for raping a girl and on searching his house the tiger skins were discovered.

25 December 1998: **A tiger** was **poisoned** in the Navegaon WS, Maharashtra. Paws, tail and head removed by poacher but not the skin.

31 December 1998: **1 leopard skin** and 2 red fox skins were seized by police in Haldwani, U.P. 2 arrests. The two accused are said to be professional hunters who kill animals using noose traps. The accused said that the leopard had been killed 4 days earlier in Padampuri jungle in Nainital District U.P.

4 January 1999: **2 tiger cubs found dead** near Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary, U.P. (See *News from the States*.)

13 January 1999: **1 tiger skin, 2 leopard skins, 4 chital skins, 1 sambar skin** and 12 rounds of ammunition seized by police in Dehradun District, U.P. The accused was already on bail for allegedly earlier killing an elephant in his sugarcane field. All the skins are said to be quite old.

17 January 1999: **A leopard** was **poached** in the Gorewada forests in Maharashtra.

22 January 1999: **A leopard** was **shot dead** in the Bijheri forests of Himachal Pradesh.

January 1999: The Project Tiger Directorate confirmed that 3

tigers had been killed, 1 was poisoned and **2 skins seized** in the last 3 months in **Sunderbans Tiger Reserve** and adjoining areas, West Bengal.

11 February 1999: **3 leopard skins** and 140 gm of musk seized by the police at Chakrata, U.P. 2 arrests.\*

12 February 1999: **A leopard** was **shot dead** in Shivpuri, M.P. The offenders fled, no arrests.

12 February 1999: **1 tiger skeleton and leopard skin seized** by police near Bhowali, Nainital District, U.P. 4 wildlife traders arrested.\*

15 February 1999: **1 tiger skin, 3 leopard skins** and 5 chital skins seized by police in District Hoshangabad, M. P. 7 arrested.\*

24 February 1999: **2 tiger skins, 2 leopard skins, 1 chital skin seized** by police in Bilaspur (MP). 5 arrested.\*

24 February 1999: **2 leopard skins** seized by CBI officials in Dehradun District, UP. 1 arrest.\*

27 February 1999: **1 old leopard skin, 5 chital skins** and 130 kgs of chital antlers seized by the police near Najibabad and Kotdwar, U.P. 2 arrests.\*

1 March 1999: **1 tiger skin, 5 pairs of tiger and leopard nails, and a leopard skin seized** in a joint operation by the police and Forest Department in Tirunelveli District (Tamil Nadu). 10 arrested. The accused allegedly killed the tiger in the vicinity of Kakakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve.

4 March 1999: **Adult male tiger found dead** in **Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve** (MP). Meat and bones found lodged in its throat. Poison suspected and the forensic report is awaited. A few days earlier, **9 kg of tiger bones** including a **skull** were seized at

Dhobha near Khitoli range, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve.

17 March 1999: **Sub-adult tiger killed by a truck** on NH 7, alongside Pench Tiger Reserve.

28 March 1999: **1 tiger skin seized** by the police in East Delhi. 2 arrests.\*

4 April 1999: **2 tiger skins** seized by police in Ghaziabad, U.P. 1 arrest. W.I.I. verified that the skins were **fake**.

\*Cases where WPSI assisted. Wildlife Protection Society of India, Thapar House, 124 Janpath, New Delhi 110001; Tel: 6213864 E-mail: wpsi.wildlife@gems.vsnl.net.in

## • *Crackdown on Kanha poachers*

Acting on a tip off about rampant poaching operations close to Kanha National Park the **Balaghat Police**, led by Superintendent of Police, Shri G. Akheto Sema, conducted intensive **anti-poaching raids** on 19 and 20 April 1999 which have led to the arrest of several persons involved in poaching and to the seizure of a large number of animal skins and bones.

**3 tiger skins, 6 leopard skins, 6 tiger skeletons** weighing nearly 55 kg, more than twenty chital and sambar antlers weighing more than 50 kg and 15 chital and sambar skins have been recovered. The police also seized some 10–15 country made crude bombs, two muzzle loader guns and other accessories used to trap animals. Poachers were killing animals by poisoning, gun shots and electrocution through high tension wires.

**17 persons** operating at various levels of the poachers ring have been **apprehended** by the police and cases booked against them under the Wildlife (Protection) Act. 15 cases have been registered against the poachers at the Baihar,



Garhi, Rapjhar, Changotola, Bharveli and Kotwali police stations. Such seizures indicate the inroads made by poachers into interior Balaghat.

**Congratulations to S.P., Shri G. Akheto Sema and his team of dedicated officers and jawans**, including Head Constable Hamid Khan, Constable Surender Chouhan, Constable Ramesh Jaitwar, Constable Paransingh, Constable Arun Kumar, SDOP Shri Vaishnav Das, Reserve Inspector Atul Lader and Sub-Inspector R.B.S. Chouhan who achieved such a huge success despite personal risk to life and financial constraints.

Source: *The Hindu*, New Delhi, 24 April 1999; Superintendent of Police Shri G.Akheto Sema report sent by Faiyaz Khudsar, *Tiger Trust*, Kanha National Park

## • **Maharashtra crackdown on traders**

A forest party, led by RFO Shri Kishore Mishrikotkar received secret information that some people were ready to sell tiger and leopard skins and other wildlife products. With the participation of the WPSI and local NGOs, Mr. Mishrikotkar organised an operation with the help of Police and local forest officials. The offenders were traced to a place near the city of Akola and on 20 May 1999, an autorickshaw was intercepted in Akola. **One tiger skin, one leopard skin** and some other items were seized. Both skins appeared to be fresh.

Three men were arrested. Further investigations are in progress.

Source: *TigerLink* participants

## • **Japan slammed at tiger conference**

At the Millennium Tiger Conference in New Delhi in March 1999, Environmental Investigation

Agency (EIA) representative, Ms Debbie Banks, stunned the participants with details of **Japan's trade in tiger products**.

In spite of the international community recognising the severity of the trade threat to tigers and banning international trade in 1975 under CITES, and in spite of Japan being a party to CITES since 1980, the Government of Japan has totally failed to adopt adequate legislation to prohibit the import and sale of raw tiger bone, tiger penis and products labelled as containing tiger. Only products that are deemed "*readily recognisable*", such as skin, claws and teeth, are banned. As a result, EIA revealed, "*it is easier to find tiger parts and derivatives on the streets of Tokyo than in any other city.*" (see *TL News* Jan. 1999 p.30) "*The Japanese Government statistics show imports from China of over 70 tonnes of tiger products between 1990 and 1992. Some believe this may represent up to 1,000 tigers!*"

Japan's continuing refusal to amend its domestic legislation and ban the import and sale of all tiger parts—its minimum obligation under CITES—critically undermines all of India's (and other range states') efforts to stem poaching and protect their tigers.

In January 1999 the Standing Committee of CITES launched the tiger **technical missions** (see p. 34) to tiger range and consumer states. Among other objectives, the missions will review legislation and enforcement. The technical missions are to be followed by political missions which can be critical in ensuring that Japan take immediate and effective action to stop their legal domestic tiger trade. The international community can play a pivotal role in ensuring that

the missions are conducted at the highest possible level.

Source: EIA address to Millennium Tiger Conference, March 1999, New Delhi

## • **Protest march targets Japan**

On 29 April 1999 the Wildlife Protection Society of India organised a **protest march**, led by two elephants, **against the ivory and tiger bone trade in Japan**. Rajasthani street theatre vividly depicted the slaughter of the elephant and tiger by the Japanese. A **letter** from WPSI on behalf of the protestors was delivered to the **Ambassador of Japan**, Mr. Hiroshi Hirabayashi, informing him of the devastating impact the recent CITES decision to resume selective trade in ivory—exclusively to Japan—is having on Indian elephants despite the fact that the decision covers only African ivory. A minimum of **250 tuskers** are recorded to have been selectively **poached** in India in the last **three years**. The letter also points out that Japan is the only major consumer country in the world where **sale of tiger parts is still legal**. The protestors requested Japan to "*cease this irrational plunder of India's natural heritage*" and to ban both these trades.

Source: WPSI, Thapar House, 124 Janpath, New Delhi 110001; Tel: 6213864; E-mail: wpsi@nde.vsnl.net.in

## • **Siberian tiger skin seized in Dalian**

On 1 April 1999, a suspected **dealer**, Ren Hongchen was caught in his hotel room in **Dalian** with a complete **Siberian tiger skin**. He later confessed that he had bought it in July 1997 and was intending to sell it for 100,000 yuan (approx. US\$ 12,500). The skin is reported to be that of a 3-year-old tiger and its body length measured 2.9

## Anti-poaching and Wildlife Trade

metres. Dalian is a coastal city of Liaoning province at the southernmost tip of the Manchurian region of China. Most of the trading goods from Manchuria to Japan and Korea transfer from the port of Dalian, so for a dealer it is a city offering a potentially good deal with rich foreign purchasers.

Source: *Dalian Daily* 5 April 1999; Wen Bo

### • *Shahtoosh seizures*

In the last two months nearly **300 shawls**, representing around 1,000 dead Tibetan antelope have been **seized in Delhi** alone.

On 26 February 1999, **nine shahtoosh shawls** were seized by the customs authorities from a French National at I.G.I. Airport, New Delhi.

On 6 March 1999, **159 shahtoosh shawls** were seized by Wildlife Inspectors in Old Delhi. One person was arrested.

On 14 March 1999, **13 shahtoosh shawls** were seized from a courier package by the Wildlife Department and Customs at IGI Airport, New Delhi. Subsequently the house of Parveen in Ranjeet Nagar was raided after a tip-off that he had booked the parcel containing the shahtoosh shawls and three other shawls to an Indian woman in France.

On 17 March 1999, Ali Mohammad Mir was caught near a park in Greater Kailash in Delhi and it is reported that the Forest Department have seized **13 shahtoosh shawls** from him. Both men were arrested. Mr. Parveen was released on Rs 20,000 bail and Ali Mhmd. Mir was remanded in custody until 30 March 1999.

In another incident, **96 shahtoosh shawls** were seized from a

shop, M/s Shyam and Company, in Chandni Chowk. The owner, Mr Naresh Narula, who was present at the time, has been arrested. The raid was carried out jointly by the special cell of Delhi Police and officers of the Wildlife Department with the assistance of WPSI.

Source: *Statesman* 18 March 1999; WPSI

### • *Shahtoosh trader sentenced in Hong Kong*

In December 1998, on a tip-off from TRAFFIC in Hong Kong, a business woman, **Bharati Ashok Assomull**, was caught with **130 shahtoosh shawls** which she was offering for sale. In late February 1999, she was found guilty and in April 1999, Hong Kong Magistrate, David John Dufton **fined** her **HK\$ 300,000** (US\$ 39,000/Rs 16 lakh) and sentenced her to a suspended term of three months in prison. The case sets a precedent in Hong Kong as the first successful prosecution based on the use of forensic identification techniques to prove that the wool in question came from the endangered Tibetan antelope. Dr. Bonnie Yates of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Forensics Laboratory gave the evidence that the shawls were made of shahtoosh. Assomull's fine is also the highest financial penalty ever for a single charge of violating Hong Kong's Animal and Plants (Protection of Endangered Species) Ordinance.

The Chinese NGO, *Friends of Nature*, call for the world's help to protect the chiru of the Qinghai-Tibet plateau and report that more than **20,000 chiru** are **killed** in the region **annually**. At this rate they predict extinction within 20 years. But as George Schaller says, "*if Kashmir were to stop making*

*shawls and wealthy women would stop wearing them the antelopes would be just fine.*"

In January, another trader, an Indian national, pleaded guilty to illegally possessing 23 shahtoosh shawls which were seized from his Hong Kong hotel room in December 1998. He was fined HK\$ 20,000 (US\$ 2,580).

Source: ENS, Hong Kong 5 and 13 April 1999 sent by Wen Bo; Ceri Williams, South China Morning Post 26 February

### • *Tibetan antelope poachers arrested*

The **Chinese police and rangers** successfully carried out a **crackdown on the poaching** of Tibetan antelope and other rare animals from 10 April to 10 May 1999. **42 poachers** were arrested, one poacher was killed and two wounded in the Hol Xil Nature Reserve. The law enforcers also **confiscated** more than **1,000** pieces of **Tibetan antelope skins**, 300 antelope heads, four wild yak furs, 26 pieces of wild ass hide, a number of bears' paws and heads of wild yaks, nine rifles, 8,000 rounds of ammunition and 12 vehicles. Fourteen different poaching organisations are reported to have been destroyed.

Source: Hu Pan, *Environment News Service* (Sent by Wen Bo)

### • *Over half a ton of ivory confiscated*

**Russian customs officials** are reported to have confiscated **1,180 pounds (537 kg)** of elephant tusks from the baggage of O Meng Khi, the wife of a North Korean diplomat in Nigeria, who was changing planes in Moscow while flying from Lagos, Nigeria, to Beijing, China, according to a Russian television report.

Source: UPI



## Wildlife Conservation Society (India Program)

### • *Activities January–March 1999*

The study of tigers and prey species in India carried out by research zoologist, **Dr. Ullas Karanth** and his assistants under the umbrella of WCS Global Tiger Campaign, continued in India at several sites. The field work in **Sunderbans Tiger Reserve**, mainly comprising of camera trap surveys was completed in February 1999 by research assistants Siva Sundaresan and Devhcharan Jathanna. Besides tigers, fishing cats, rhesus macaques and chital were also photo-trapped. These data are currently under analysis. Excellent cooperation received from West Bengal Forest Department and its officers enabled the survey to be completed efficiently.

Camera trapping work was initiated in Nagarahole for the eighth year and is expected to be completed in April 1999. Field mapping and survey work was begun in **Bandipur Tiger Reserve**. Both these field modules are being carried out in collaboration with the Karnataka Forest Department. Program officer N. Samba Kumar and Research Assistants, Dr. M.B. Krishna, Niren Jain and Srinivas were also involved in the studies.

An alternative approach to monitoring ungulate populations using dung surveys was initiated in **Nagarahole** by Dr. Karanth and the research team. Volunteer Naturalists from Pondicherry University and other conservation NGOs participated in the effort during February 1999.

Source: Ullas Karanth, WCS India Program, 403 Seebo Apts. 26/2 Aga Abbas Ali Road, Bangalore 560042 Tel: (080) 591747; E-mail: karanth@blr.vsnl.net.in

### • *Estimation of tiger densities*

Dr. Karanth had initiated the country-wide, multi-site sample survey of tiger and prey densities in several reserves in 1995. Under this project tiger densities were estimated using photographic capture-recapture techniques and prey densities were estimated using the line transect surveys. The first four study areas covered under this project were in well-protected parts of Nagarahole (Karnataka), Pench and Kanha (Madhya Pradesh) and Kaziranga (Assam). Some results from these studies have now undergone peer review process and have been published in the reputed scientific journal *Ecology* in its December 1998 issue. An abstract of the paper, "**Estimation of tiger densities in India using photographic captures and recaptures**", jointly published by Ullas Karanth and James D. Nichols is provided below:

*"The tiger (Panthera tigris) is an endangered, large felid whose demographic status is poorly*

*known across its distributional range in Asia. Previously applied methods for estimating tiger abundance, using total counts based on tracks, have proved unreliable. Lack of reliable data on tiger densities not only has constrained our ability to understand the ecological factors shaping communities of large, solitary felids, but also has undermined the effective conservation of these animals. In this paper, we describe the use of a field method proposed by Karanth (1995) which combines camera-trap photography, to identify individual tigers, with theoretically well-founded capture-recapture models. We developed a sampling design for camera-trapping and used the approach to estimate tiger population size and density in four representative tiger habitats in different parts of India. The field method worked well and provided data suitable for analysis using closed capture-recapture models. The results suggest the potential for applying this methodology to rigorously estimate abundances, survival rates and other population parameters for tigers and other low-density, secretive animal species in which individuals can be identified based on natural markings.*

*Estimated probabilities of photo-capturing tigers present in the study sites ranged from 0.75 to 1.00. Estimated densities of tigers > 1 yr old ranged from  $4.1 \pm 1.31$  to  $16.8 \pm 2.96$  tigers/100 km<sup>2</sup> (mean  $\pm$  1 SE). Simultaneously, we used line-transect sampling to determine that mean densities of principal tiger prey at these sites ranged from 56.1 to 63.8 ungulates/km<sup>2</sup>. Tiger densities appear to be positively associated with prey densities, except at one site influenced by tiger poaching. Our results generally support the prediction that relative abundances of large felid species may be governed primarily by the abundance and structure of their prey communities."*

Source: Ullas Karanth, WCS India Program, 403 Seebo Apts., 26/2 Aga Abbas Ali Road, Bangalore 560042 Tel: (080) 591747; E-mail: karanth@blr.vsnl.net.in; *Ecology* December 1998.

### • *Ranthambhore tiger-prey study*

A short-term tiger-prey study is being undertaken in the **Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve** to obtain basic data on relative and absolute densities of tigers and prey, using line transect sampling techniques, pellet sampling, camera-trapping and tiger sign encounter information. The project started in May 1999 and will continue until March 2000. The study is being done by Dr. Ullas Karanth of the Wildlife Conservation Society—India Program on behalf of the Centre for Wildlife Studies, Bangalore, in collaboration with the Rajasthan Forest Department. Mr. Fateh Singh Rathore

of *Tiger Watch* will advise the study. His locally active NGO, *Tiger Watch* will also collaborate with the fieldwork and help provide resources for the project.

Source: Project proposal, 'Estimation of tiger and prey densities in RTR using population sampling-based approaches' by Dr. K. Ullas Karanth

### • *Technical workshop*

In January 1999, Dr. Karanth and Mr. P. K. Sen, Director, Project Tiger, collaboratively organised a 4-day **technical workshop** in Nagarahole on "*Sampling based approaches to estimating tiger and prey populations*". The international workshop was inaugurated by Union Minister for Environment and Forests Shri Suresh Prabhu in the presence of Shri D. Manjunanth, Forest Minister, Karnataka and Shri S.K. Chakrabarti, Chief Wildlife Warden, Karnataka and Shri Valmik Thapar of the Steering Committee of Project Tiger.

The goal of the workshop was to review ideas and techniques to be incorporated into a **field manual** and a comprehensive **technical manual** which will explain several techniques for estimating the geographic distribution, relative densities and absolute densities of prey species and tigers. The range of techniques discussed covered a variety of ecological situations which prevail in Southern Asia. These techniques will also be applicable under different field situations in terms of availability of equipment, human skills and other resources.

### Update on the tiger ecology research project in Panna National Park, M.P.

#### • *Ecology of tiger: to enable a realistic projection of the requirements needed to maintain a demographically viable population*

Under the project so far **five tigers** have been **radio-collared** and monitored over various lengths of time ranging from 3 months to over three years. The **dominant male**, who was collared in April 1996, ranged over 246 km<sup>2</sup> at its peak. Later, during an encounter with another competing male, he received serious injuries and the radio-collar was also damaged. The damaged collar was replaced and the animal treated by veterinary doctors. As a result of this encounter and intense territorial conflict, the collared male lost a part of his range. He now patrols an area of 184 km<sup>2</sup>. Despite losing a substantial part of his range he has managed to hold on to the core area of 50 km<sup>2</sup> where he spent over 80% of his time. The encounter with the other male was followed by intense marking in the disputed area. At one place, on a 60 to 80 m long game path between two roads, both

The scientist participants in the workshop included: Dr. Ullas Karanth, Dr. Timothy O'Brien, Dr. R.S. Chundawat, Dr. Ravi Chellam, Dr. Y.V. Jhala, Mr. Qamar Qureshi and Ms. Kae Kawanishi (wildlife biologists with expertise in carnivore and ungulate ecology); Dr. James Nichols and Mr. Lex Hiby (quantitative ecologists specialising in population estimation), Dr. Brad Stith (specialist in population modelling and landscape ecology); Dr. Anil Gore and Dr. Sharayu Paranjape (bio-statisticians specialising in population ecology issues). Practising Wildlife Managers were represented by Mr. P.K. Sen (Director Project Tiger), Mr. Vinod Rishi (former Field Director, Sunderbans and former Director, Project Elephant), Mr. V.K. Gogi and Mr. Rajshekhar (Deputy Conservators of Forests from Karnataka) and Mr. Udhyan (Deputy Conservator of Forests, Tamil Nadu). Field support for the workshop was provided by Karnataka Forest Department and N. Samba Kumar, M.B. Krishna (Centre for Wildlife Studies) and M.D. Madhusudan (Centre for Ecological Research and Conservation). The workshop was hosted with the assistance of Kabini River Lodge and V. Krishna Prasad, Member Steering Committee of Project Tiger. The funding support for the workshop was provided by Wildlife Conservation Society, New York.

Source: Ullas Karanth, WCS India Program, 403 Seebo Apts., 26/2 Aga Abbas Ali Road, Bangalore 560042 Tel: (080) 591747; E-mail: karanth@blr.vsnl.net.in

males marked with great intensity and this was monitored. It was found that they **communicated** by leaving their **body scent** mainly **through scrapes and rolling on the ground**. The collared male visited the site almost once to twice a week but was not located beyond this point and a similar response was observed for the other male. This intense marking continued for several months and gradually the frequency of marking has declined.

The collared female **FM02** was monitored for eleven months from January 1997 to December 1998, when her collar stopped functioning. Attempts were made to replace the collar this winter but the research team was not able to tranquillise the tigress. Her earlier litter of three female cubs are now over three years old and independent. She is now raising another litter of two—one male and a female—which are now over one year old.

One of her female cubs from the previous litter, **FM03**, was collared in March 1998 and has now established her territory adjoining the mother's. Her



last one year's range is large—61 km<sup>2</sup>. At the initial stage she ranged widely, exploring the area before settling down. She now spends over 80% of her time in an area of about 41 km<sup>2</sup> on the upper plateau. In this area of intense use, water is extremely limited and by mid-April there is hardly any water hole left for her. This has forced her to moved to an area not used by her for several months. She had mated with the collared male (her father) in November 1998 but did not conceive.

Her two siblings were moving in coalition and one of them, **FM04**, was radio-collared in January 1999. She occupied an area on the other side of the mother's territory by replacing an established old female ('Bargari female', aged over 12 years). She has been monitored for three and half months and her range is 30 km<sup>2</sup>. Within her range, the two year old male cub of the 'Bargari female' is still active and on several occasions

he has been seen with FM04 and on one occasion both were seen feeding on the same kill.

It has been observed that in summer over 80% of the locations of the radio-collared tiger are within 100 m of water. Water holes and cool shade are the most important factors during the hot season. For a large-bodied mammal with a high metabolic rate, such as tiger, at extremely high ambient temperatures, thermo-regulation plays a critical role on their ecology and behaviour in Dry Tropical Forests. Monitoring of radio-collared tigers has indicated that in extreme situations tiger are **using burrow-like dens** during the day. They even abandon their kills and move as far as one-and-a-half kilometres to reach the cool spot, during the hot months.

**Dr. R.S. Chundawat, Neel Gogate**, Wildlife Institute of India, P.O. Box 18, Dehra Dun, U.P. Tel: (0135) 640112-5; fax: 640117; E-mail: wii@wii.gov.in

### Royal Bardia National Park—research project update

The **predator/prey component** of the five year NORAD funded research project is well underway in the Royal Bardia National Park, Nepal (see *TL News* Sept. 1998). Some 30 hog deer, 15 barking deer and 3 wild boar as well as two leopards, have been fitted with radio collars and are being monitored. The collaring of more tigers has been postponed until the next dry season in November/December.

Besides monitoring these animals for habitat use and mortality data, the project staff completed very intensive **censusing** of the prey and tiger populations in the core area of the Park (approx. 100 km<sup>2</sup>). The results are reported to look interesting and indicate that the total density and biomass of wild herbivores (not including elephant and rhino) are **among the highest recorded** in Asia. The **density of tigers is higher than**

in **Royal Chitwan N.P.** and most other tiger reserves elsewhere. There are also indications that this local tiger population has a different social organisation.

On the basis of these preliminary results, a testable hypothesis of the social structure and population ecology of tigers in spatially fragmented habitats has been developed (source-sink dynamics on smaller landscape scales). (A similar comparative study of lions in Botswana has been started and another on jaguar in Guatemala is to start later this year.)

WWF-Nepal is now funding part of the census work using camera traps. This is about to be completed in the main study area of the Park.

Source: **Prof. Per Wegge**, Bardia Research Program, Project Leader of the predator/prey component, Dept. Biology and Nature Conservation, Agricultural University of Norway; PO Box 5014, N-1432 As, Norway E-mail: per.wegge@ibn.nlh.no

### Research projects on mammalian species

Having realised the "*urgent need to generate base line scientific data on the important mammalian species*", **Department of Science and Technology**, Government of India, with the assistance of Dr. Ishwar Prakash organised an **Interactive Meeting on Mammalian Ecology** at the Desert Regional Station, Zoological Survey of India, Jodhpur, from 9 to 12 February 1999, with the aim of selecting research projects by Indian mammalogists for financial assistance from Department of Science and Technology.

Thirty-five projects were received and after a preliminary screening, fifteen Principal Investigators

were invited to present their projects before a panel of experts. Thorough discussions during four days resulted into recommending **twelve projects** for financial assistance.

Project proposals on rare and threatened mammals received priority. Among the projects recommended were studies on two carnivores, the leopard and the wolf, to be taken up in Gujarat and Maharashtra, the ecology of four-horned antelope to be initiated in Orissa and Maharashtra and a study on gaur in Tamil Nadu.

**Dr. Ishwar Prakash**, Desert Regional Station, Zoological Survey of India, 107, Kamla Nehru Nagar, Chopasni Road, Jodhpur 342009.

### • **Research notes—tigers and bears**

Recently, and in particular over the last four months, frequent reports have been heard of tiger/bear interactions. We are used to hearing about tigers chasing leopards or tigers snatching food from crocodiles, as happens in Ranthambhore, but seldom have we heard of **sloth bears chasing tigers**. This has been witnessed on three occasions in the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve and some of these chases have been caught on film.

In the Kanha Tiger Reserve, a **tiger** was seen **eating on a bear** carcass and from Panna T.R. come reports of several incidents of tigers chasing and feeding on sloth bear.

Source: V. Thapar

### **Sloth bear news wanted**

The Wildlife Institute of India is carrying out a study on the ecology of **sloth bear** in the Panna National Park, with the support of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. As part of the study they are conducting a **questionnaire survey** to assess the status and distribution of sloth bear throughout India. Any participants who can help in providing information, please contact K. Yoganand, c/o Dr. A.J.T. Johnsingh, W.I.I., P.O. Box 18, Dehra Dun 248 001 for a copy of their questionnaire.

\* \* \*

## Legal

### **News from LAW-E**

#### • **Legal workshop in Jaipur**

**Legal Action for Wildlife and Environment (LAW-E)** in collaboration with the Forest Training School, Jaipur organised a one day **training workshop** at Jaipur on 20 March 1999. About 20 Range Officers and Foresters participated in the workshop in which the problems encountered in implementing the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code (Cr.P.C.) and Evidence Act were discussed. The implementation of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 was also discussed along with the order of 12 December 1996 in Writ Petition No. 202 of 1995 in the case of T.N. Godavarman Thirumalkpad vs. Union of India.

Several problems faced by the field staff came up during the interaction, one of which was the problem of preventing women from entering into the forest for

illicit collection of forest products for commercial purposes. This is an administrative problem that was felt could only be countered by posting at least one women home guard at Range level to deal with such situations.

Source: LAW-E, 409, Lawyers Chambers, Bhagwan Das Road, New Delhi 110001; Tel: 3070029; E-mail: lawe@bol.net.in; Mahendra Vyas, LAW-E, res. tel: 6511176/6569864

### **New office**

LAW-E will have its own office/chamber at the end of May 1999:

409, Lawyers Chambers

Supreme Court

Bhagwan Das Road

New Delhi 110 001

Tel: (011) 307 0029

E-mail: lawe@bol.net.in



• *Good news from the SC*  
*—Karnataka encroachments*

Large scale encroachment of prime forest land in the Western Ghats has become big business thanks to a steep rise in coffee prices. Profits of Rs 5 lakh per acre per year can be made which has spurred many, including the rich and powerfully connected, to encroach on forest lands. The Western Ghats are one of the 18 "biodiversity hotspots" of the world and harbour a large number of endangered mammal species such as the tiger, elephant, gaur, wild dog etc.

In response to an application filed by the trustees of LAW-E through the *Amicus Curiae* (I.A. No.276), the Honourable Supreme Court, under an order of 30 July 1998, had appointed Shri R.M.N. Sahai, Conservator Forests, Shimoga Circle, as Court Commissioner to undertake a report on the extent of forest land that had been encroached by coffee planters in the Thatkola Reserve Forest, Chikmagalur District. Shri Sahai's scathing report confirmed blatant violation of the Supreme Court's Interim Order of 12 December 1996.

With local political support, the encroachers formed an association to fight the eviction proceedings initiated against them by the Forest Department. They successfully pressurised the Minister and State Government to stall the Survey of India's attempt to ascertain the extent of the encroachment and insisted that the Land Department should be involved. In their earlier survey, the Land Department had apparently made a poor attempt to cover up the encroachments to save the rich and powerful. Even the Minister of Forest, Mr. Manjunath is said to have actively participated in protests against the Forest Department and ordered stoppage of the Survey of India's survey work.

Shri A.M. Annaiah, DCF, Chikmagalur, and his staff have done commendable work and booked more than 1000 cases of encroachment. They have initiated eviction proceedings against about 500 encroachers—a herculean task especially in the circumstances. One of the charge sheets was filed against Shri: B.L. Shankar, the former state Janata Dal chief who is presently a cabinet minister in the Karnataka Government, for alleged encroachment of the Reserved Forest. The State Government retaliated by immediately transferring Mr. Annaiah—ignoring the assurance given by the Standing Counsel of the State of Karnataka that no officer will be transferred without the permission of the Court. Indeed, one by one, all the officers of the area—the C.F., Mr. Sahai,

the DCF Mr. Annaiah, the ACF, Range Officers and Foresters who knew the area well, have been transferred.

The Supreme Court was informed about these shocking developments and responded swiftly by issuing notice to the State to give a detailed affidavit and comments on the report submitted by Shri Sahai. On 7 May 1999, when the matter came up for hearing, the State of Karnataka asked for more time to study the Court Commissioner's report. The three-man bench of the Supreme Court, presided over by Justice B.N. Kripal, took a serious view of the State's interference in the Survey of India's work and has ordered that the survey would be completed only by the Survey of India and that they should report directly to the Supreme Court, in 3 months. The Court directed that there should be no administrative interference and that the assistance of any officer of the Karnataka Forest Department may be taken by the Survey of India and that any officer so involved may not be transferred.

The matter will come up for hearing in early August when the Court re-opens after summer vacations.

Source: LAW-E

• *Encroachments stopped in Tamil Nadu*

It is reported that the encroachment of forest land in the finest areas of evergreen and shola forest, such as is found in the Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu and elsewhere, has become quite a scam in which much of the administrative machinery, barring a few dedicated forest officers and staff, are involved.

The illegal allotment of *pattas* in connivance with the revenue authorities was brought to the notice of the Supreme Court through a detailed affidavit filed by the Tamil Nadu Forest Staff Association of Gudalur Division. On the basis of this affidavit, an interlocutory application was filed by one of the trustees of LAW-E through the *Amicus Curiae* and heard on 7 May 1999 by a bench presided over by Justice B.N. Kripal. The Court promptly ordered a stop to the granting of *pattas* and to the regularisation of encroachments until further orders.

Source: LAW-E

• *Railway sal sleepers scam*

It seems that a major scam may be unravelling with regard to the procurement of *sal* railway sleepers. In the mid-eighties, the Railways required about 34 lakh sleepers but in 1991, this was reduced to about 65,000 sleepers per year. In their compliance report

on affidavit, in response to the Supreme Court's order of 12 December 1996, the Railways stated that it is procuring approximately 45,000 cubic metres (approx. 5.1 lakh sleepers) of *sal* wood sleepers per year.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) has a "Sleeper Pricing Subcommittee" in which there are also representatives from the Railway Ministry. The normal practise is for procurement to go through this. The Railways are **only permitted to purchase from public sector**, corporations of State/Central Government on the basis of quantities allotted and prices fixed by the MoEF. MoEF also requires that the PCCF of the state that is supplying the sleepers, should certify that they originated from his *sal*-producing state and that the *sal* had been cut in accordance with the approved working plan and thus was not from illicit sources.

However at the 25th meeting of the committee, held in October 1996, The Railways proposed that *sal* should be bought on **open tender**. This was opposed by the MoEF but nevertheless, the Railways reportedly went ahead and arbitrarily invited tenders from various non-*sal* producing states such as Nagaland. These tenders were opened on 4 February 1997 and on 12 July the same year, the *Statesman* reported that the Railways had awarded contracts to two companies—one for over **Rs 16 crore** to Nagaland State Co-operative Marketing and Consumer Federation Ltd., Dimapur and the other to **MMTC Ltd.**, New Delhi for more than **Rs 81 crore**. The report alleged that these had been awarded due to "political pressures since the main beneficiaries, a few forest contractors in the North-East, are said to have political links in Delhi."

The then Minister of Environment, Shri Saifuddin Soz, wrote to the Railways Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan in October 1997 protesting against this procurement, referring also to the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh's objection that neither organisation has direct access to *sal* timber as Nagaland does not grow *sal* and MMTC is a central undertaking concerned with mines, minerals and metals.

In 1997, the *Indian Council of Legal Aid and Advice* sought the Supreme Court's intervention to prevent the Railways from procuring more sleepers from private sources as it was feared that these were illicit and obtained without approved Working Plans. This could not be heard but the Railway Ministry also filed an I.A. in the Court, seeking permission to be allowed to procure sleepers from private sources which it said provided them at **lower rates** than those fixed by the Subcommittee. When this came up for hearing in the

Supreme Court on **7 May 1999**, the Bench comprising of Justice Kripal, Justice Shah and Justice Khare immediately issued an **order stopping** the Railways from further **procurement and use of the wooden sleepers**.

It was clear that something was amiss. How could non *sal*-producing states supply the timber at rates lower than producing ones, if it was legally procured? As in the Bastar tree-felling scam, the circumstances surrounding the procurements from Nagaland and MMTC would appear to be a fit case for a CBI enquiry.

(In the Bastar scam (see *TL News* April 1998), the CBI have completed their enquiry and launched prosecution of a number of those involved).

Source: LAW-E

### • *WWF-I vs Union of India*

The matter of the Writ Petition No. 337 of 1996 in the case of WWF-I vs. Union of India came up for hearing and the Ministry of Environment and Forests in its counter affidavit pointed out that the States have **not** been able to **settle the rights of the people** living in the National Parks and Sanctuaries though necessary financial assistance has been provided to the states to do so. Since the States are supposed to implement the Act, the Central Government can only provide necessary funds and policy guidelines. The **Court** expressed its **dissatisfaction** with the reply and asked the MoEF to submit a comprehensive plan of action how it proposes to implement the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Source: LAW-E

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### • *J&K Wildlife Act to be amended*

The Jammu and Kashmir Government is finally contemplating amendment of certain provisions of their State Wildlife Protection Act. The Forest and Environment Minister, Mohmd Ramzan said that this had become necessary to conserve the biodiversity in the state. Source: *Rajasthan Patrika*, Jaipur 21 Feb. 1999

### • *Petition on people's rights in PAs*

A case has been filed by CORD and others in the Supreme Court, based on hearings carried out by the Indian People's Tribunal on Environment and Human Rights (IPT) at Sitanadi Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh and Nagarahole National Park in Karnataka. The Petition argues for the continuation of people's rights in forest areas and PAs, and for a stop to all displacement. Source: JPAM Update 19 Feb. 1999



**Community conservation and tigers**  
 During the last year...our work has picked up and now the process of water, forest and biodiversity has picked up momentum. During this March 1999, five different tigers have been sighted which included one tigress and cubs. This has been the best reward for our 15 years work in the area. This pleasure to me is like a reward for the rejuvenation process we started a decade back. This work, though not directly for tiger, has resulted in the tiger population growing. This is to me a result of the work in the direction of environment rejuvenation.

**Rajendra Singh**, Tarun Bharat Sangh, Bheekampura-Kishori, via Thanagazi 301022, Alwar, Rajasthan

I would like to appreciate your concern for the staff of our department who work under oppressive circumstances while carrying out their duties. Publishing articles related to such commitment by our staff will not only boost the morale of other staff but it will highlight the commendable work of the "foot soldiers of conservation". As requested by you, we are enclosing herewith a copy of the details regarding attacks resulting in death of our staff since 1 January 1990.

**K.N. Singh**, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, U.P., Lucknow

...let us exchange views from other participants on their observations as NGOs. Everywhere local poaching is the hazardous problem around PAs and in other wilderness areas in this country ... only 1/10 of the poaching cases are reported in media, while the rest go unnoticed. There is no doubt that this problem is totally

underrated by the government. What ever I write is totally based on ground realities and my experience and observations in the last 35 years.

...I would like to draw the attention of the Government, the I.B.W.L., State Wildlife Advisory Boards and the MoEF on the failure of forest infrastructure to combat poaching due to: the low budget allocations for wildlife protection; the lack of manpower and equipment; corruption in the wildlife department leading to wildlife poaching and increase in timber smuggling; the fact that the Judiciary does not take wildlife crime seriously; there is undue pressure on forest officials that affects the system; human right activists do not consider the provisions of the W(P)A and F(C)A as important in the environmental system; most NGOs do not motivate forest personnel; various government agencies have also failed in raising awareness through their field staff.

For the last 3 decades I have been in close association with forest officials and my personal observation is that only one in ten DFOs keep any interest in wildlife studies and give any physical effort in implementation. Similarly only 1/10 RFOs feel any responsibility towards conservation and protection. Most of them lack interest and knowledge of wildlife in general and work only mechanically in the field.

There is no coordination between the various wings of the Forest Department for conservation of forest habitats or protection of wildlife.

I would be very pleased if people who are interested in wildlife and NGOs who have some practical field experience send

their opinion on how to fight the poaching menace in India. (edited)  
**Mahendra Singh Chauhan**, Hon. Wildlife Warden Gadchiroli District, Village Chaprala, PO Chandampalli, Tehsil Chamorshi, District Gadchiroli.

It is not merely money which can save the tiger or anything beautiful. Tiger and the entire biological baggage that goes to create the animal's aura have got to be made visible to the people at large and the enormity and sickness of mind of those who destroy the magnificent manifestation for personal gains, whether it be money or for questionable personal health cures, have to be shown up powerfully so that there is a widespread disgust and anger aroused against such crimes.

People living around Protected Areas must be encouraged to get involved with the areas in new and imaginative ways—for instance if commercial groups can operate highly profitable enterprises around Corbett, Kanha, Bandhavgarh, etc. why cannot the local communities be encouraged to provide hospitality and exposure—the money going directly to them?

As long as bullocks and mithuns are their prime life support animals and plots of rice or sugarcane their means of subsistence they cannot become concerned and highly motivated partners in conserving the forests, the deer, the tigers and/or the elephants. The latter two will continue to be direct threats to their livelihood. Veerapans and such poachers will be seen as dashing Robin Hoods and the men in Khakhi as the minions of the oppressive "sarkar". We shall never be able to place conservation high on our political agendas since vote seekers, like the media, do not have the time or

the inducement to talk about forests or about strict vigilance against poachers.

...some very powerfully radical concept will need to be evolved and policy decisions taken and put into action. Till such time, Protected Areas must be very strictly protected, if needs be with strong authority.

**Lavkumar Khacher**, 646, Vastunirman, Gandhinagar 382 022

...we have decided to hold a seminar on some of the important problems faced by the **Manas National Park** as well as to find out some ways and means for the protection of the wildlife therein.

...we cannot alone make the programme successful until and unless we get help from others. Moreover, financial assistance is a major question here. ...it is our earnest request to you to extend your helping hand by giving your valuable advice in respect of financial assistance, your participation and in having responses from other institutes and organisations.

**Green Land Club**, Barpeta. c/o Dr. Raj Kumar Das, Animal Health Centre, Dept. of A.H. and Vety. (Assam), Khanapara, Guwahati -22

The Environmental Investigation Agency, London, sent me a publication, "India's Tiger Crisis," for a letter campaign for legislation and conservation action both for Japan and India.

In this regard I have involved one hundred persons and sent all the letters to the Prime Ministers of Japan and India. I hope the 100 letters can impact on their appropriate legislation.

**Niladri Bihari Mishra**, Central Hospital Colony, Banikala 758038 Keonjhar Orissa

We read the latest issue of TL News and found most of the news sad, disturbing and at the same time heartening. The efforts being put in by small organisations at grassroots levels are commendable.

We here in Gujarat feel that some sort of coverage and effort should be dedicated to the lion, of which only 300 are left in the wild... TL reaches out to hundreds of concerned persons and field people in India and elsewhere and maybe due coverage and news of the lions and conservation efforts of these cats could bring in more constructive plans and funds to save the Gir and its predators. And one last suggestion—Tiger-Link could be renamed Cat Link?!

Anyway commendable job you all at TL are doing and we look forward to putting in our efforts at saving the tigers of India with the rest of the country's tiger fraternity.

**Sandy Diwan**, Baroda Nature Lovers, 302 Chandralok Bldg., opp. Children's Hospital, Karelibaug, Baroda 390018 Fax: (0265) 363207 E-mail: karvy.brd@karvy.sprintpg.ems.vsnl.net.in

Our organisation, **Khoj** has been working in the **Melghat region** for the last one and a half years. We also believe in wildlife conservation. We regularly run environment conservation programmes along with our tribal welfare programmes. We are making attempts to enable the coexistence of man and animal. We want to promote awareness about tiger conservation amongst the tribal communities and work in the field of environment conservation.

We need information, books, slides/audio-video cassettes, posters.

We are sure that your work experience will encourage us. We wish to become a member of TigerLink to be able to contribute. We need an opportunity to prove our worth. Please write to us.

(translated from Hindi)

**Purnima Upadhyay, Khoj**, Near Govind Lodge, Paratwada 444805, Amravati, Maharashtra

Sir, we are proud to have a Tiger Reserve in our district. **Tadoba (TATR)** being one of the oldest National Parks rightly deserved the status of Tiger Reserve. The population of tigers in the park area has shown significant increase, since it was declared as Tiger Reserve.

I feel that villages coming within the boundaries of a proposed Tiger Reserve need to be resettled before it is declared as such. With great respect for the vision in declaring Tadoba as Tiger Reserve, the haste shown in declaring it was unwarranted.

The villages within the TATR do not having the basic amenities of living and cannot be provided due to the stringent regulations. It is therefore desirable and in the interest of the reserve that all these villages need to be resettled, immediately. The villagers have expressed their desire to resettle on certain conditions and have submitted their demands prior to resettlement to the Chief Conservator of Forest and Wildlife, Maharashtra and the Revenue Authorities. Basic facilities, such as school, hospital, proper drinking water facility, etc. need to be made available, before resettling of all these villages. I personally



feel that this issue needs to be urgently considered and implemented, for the better implementation of Project Tiger.

I feel that a **joint meeting** of all the NGOs working in this field, Sarpanch, Police, the Patil of respective villages, the Chief Conservator and the Minister needs to be arranged for coming to a logical conclusion of this vexed and important issue. (condensed)

**S.R. Hastak**, Working Presedent, Advisory Committee, T.E.A.K. Club, Chandrapur

**Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve** (TATR) contains lots of wildlife species and dense forest. It is also popular for its tigers. But nowadays, it suffers from a **tourism explosion** and other problems. In the month of January, near Tadoba reservoir, one jatra is held every year attended by thousands of devotees who cut chickens and goats and, in the absence of garbage baskets, throw the intestines and other waste material of the goats into the reservoir. The area for cooking is also not restricted, so the devotees are cooking their food in deep forest, where ever they want. Some tourists also take advantage and in the guise of devotees cook their food on the bank of reservoir although tourists are banned from cooking within the TATR.

Another problem is that four-wheel vehicles are restricted to 50, but on 3 Jan. 1999, 76 vehicles are entered in the park register. There is no proper communication between all gates on walkie-talkie to prevent more vehicles into the park. Vehicles have also entered the park after it was closed to tourists through their power and position with officials—a sad ex-

ample of how money and position work to break the laws and rules of the W(P)A.

**Uday Patel**, Secretary, Jabalpur Nature Society, c/o Bombay Garage, Sadar, Jabalpur 482001, M.P.

Some days back when I was at **Tadoba Tiger Reserve** near Chandrapur, I saw there an extraordinary scene. There are some ministers and their security guards staying there. Those ministers completely avoid the rules and regulations of the National Parks and go into the forest the whole day with their stengun-holding bodyguards. The ministers also go to the forest at night with searchlights which is prohibited. They travelled the entire night through the forest, including core and buffer zone, which is completely banned for any other tourist. Next day I saw some civets and jungle cats mashed onto the road by the cars.

Are the rules not for those ministers who themselves made the rules for people! Who is responsible for this, the concerned officer of Tadoba or the park officer of Tadoba who was present at that time in Reserve?

**Dr. Anand B. Shekhawat**, Ring Road, Sadar, Nagpur (Maharashtra)

There is this place called **Chintapalli**, 132 km from Visakhapatnam which has a sizeable tiger and leopard population. The people here are mostly tribals which include Bhagatha, Valmiki, Samantha, Kondu & Konda Dura, spread out widely.

What I intend to do is to create some awareness here not to kill wildlife. Please **advise** me on the approach I need to adopt. The

area is sensitive due to Naxalite operation.

Sir, this being my final year of college in **Masters in International Business (MIB)**, the placements sessions have begun. Whatever little time I get, I leave for the hills. Funds have been a major problem since this project is being done without anybody's help. My informer in Chintapalli keeps me posted of happenings regularly.

**Gautam Nagpal**, Flat 8, #13 Prince Apts., CBM Compound, Vizag. 530003, Andhra Pradesh

We, **Society for Environment, Wildlife Action and Awareness (SEWAA)**, are an NGO based in **Dehra Dun** and working for environmental education and awareness programmes focusing on school students.

Presently we have taken a project for "Conserving India's Biodiversity" with school children. Any relevant information, data, newsletters, annual reports and publications are welcome.

SEWAA, 34 Mohini Road, Dehra Dun 248001 Tel: (0135) 672190 e-mail: Anil Jaggi greendun@nde.vsnl.net.in website: www.uttarakhand.org/SEWAA/

Tiger census figures printed in the **TigerLink** Vol. 5 no. 1 clearly reflect that there is something wrong somewhere. In such a bad situation I don't understand how is it possible to keep track of increasing tiger population when officials cannot tell with certainty even where one 'Sita' has gone. Credibility of census report is in question. I think we should immediately change the system and method of census.

There are many small tiger populations outside reserves. Census in these forests should be done

## Open Forum

with help of local NGOs and steps should be taken to save these isolated populations with the help of local people and NGOs' participation. We should also appeal to government to create special courts to take immediate action in poaching/illegal wildlife trade cases. I understand at present hundreds of cases are pending in different states. Till date no action has been taken against three Bollywood film stars in blackbuck poaching case even after so much outrage.

All NGOs together should write to the government to take fast and immediate action; if required a signature campaign should be conducted.

Navneet Maheshwari, D. B. Vallabh Das Palace, Hanuman Tal, Jabalpur 482002 (MP). Tel: (0761) 340095, 341774, 349613. Fax: 341001. E-mail: ppmt@bom4.vsnl.net.in

Thank you very much for sending your newsletter. I was shocked to read the declining numbers of our tigers. Tigers are on the top of the food chain and when it is assured that the tiger is increasing, then we can be sure that rest of the animal species and their habitat can be saved. TigerLink is doing a good job in the fight for the protection of wildlife. The protection of tiger indirectly helps in saving other animals also. To protect tigers their large habitat must be protected which in turn protects other animals.

Avijit Nath, C/o M.M. Nath, 1st Link Road, Lane No.4, Silchar 788006, Assam

Congratulations on your TigerLink News—the best collection of information concerning tiger populations and wildlife conservation.

How depressing though that every National Park and Wildlife

Sanctuary in India is facing grave problems of under funding, under staffing, poaching and deforestation. We previously believed that sanctuaries were safe havens where wildlife could flourish as Mother Nature intended. Obviously no, we can not afford to be complaisant where wildlife protection is concerned.

Of course, human populations matter also, but not to the continual detriment of animals and their habitat. After all, we are not the only species God put on Earth, but if we (the human race) continue in this mode of destruction, we may end up being the only species left on Earth—with maybe a few miserable captive animals in zoos for humans to go and stare at.

I have come to realise that in every community there is a small handful of people who deeply care about animals and their immediate surroundings, others believe that animals and all that green peace stuff has got nothing to do with them. So it looks like its up to us, the small caring handful, to do our utmost and speak out for forests and animals who do not have a voice, nor a vote of their own.

Thanks TigerLink for spreading the word to like minded people from India to the rest of the world.

TigerLink is full of names and addresses, so lets not remain strangers to one another!

Adele O'Shea, The Cat Club of Bahrain, PO Box 37881, East Riffa, Bahrain

### The Tigers Plight

As the fingers of dawn shake away the misty shroud of night  
And spreads through the forest canopy its dappled morning light

The tiger prowls as is her right

The golden colour of the sun, stripes black as the night

This beautiful creature is an awesome sight

Her eyes glow like the fires flame

Stealth and surprise is the tigers game

Silently she moves along the forest floor

Carefully she places her great big paw

But the monkey high up in the forest trees

Watch her approach with apparent ease

They bark a warning of alarm

To those grazing below to flee from harm

Her hunt is over so she takes measure

Snarling at the monkey she growls her displeasure

Like a phantom she melts into the shadowy background

But the forest falls silent—there is not a sound

A sure indication that Man's around

This beautiful creature so powerful and unique

Is so endangered her future looks bleak

The hunter is the hunted and on the run

From Man, his greed and his lethal gun

So there in the flickering dappled light

The tiger sleeps as is her right

Will Man in his wisdom heed the Tigers plight?

Pamela McCann



- ***Riding the Tiger: Tiger conservation in human-dominated landscapes*** edited by John Seidensticker, Sarah Christie and Peter Jackson, published by Cambridge University Press 1999 with the aid of a grant from the *Save the Tiger Fund*. 383 pp. Colour photos. This collection of papers from scientists and experts involved in the study of tigers and in various aspects of tiger conservation, arose out of information first presented to the *Tiger 2000* symposium held in London in February 1997. Available in hardback and paperback. "1000 copies are being distributed to appropriate individuals, post-holders, institutions and libraries around the world". The text is also being translated into Russian and Bahasa Indonesian. Enquiries to: Sarah Christie, The Zoological Society of London, Regent's Park, London NW1 4RY Sarah.Christie@zsl.org
- ***Tiger: Habitats, life cycles, food chains, threats*** by Valmik Thapar. Wayland Publishers, 1999. 48 pp. £ 10.99 A profusely illustrated children's book, explaining in simple language, the natural history of the tiger and the threats to its survival.
- ***Tiger: Portrait of a Predator*** by Valmik Thapar, photographs by Gunter Ziesler and Fateh Singh Rathore. Bramley Books, 1999. 200 pp. £ 19.99. A reprint of the 1986 edition, with a new postscript.
- ***On the Brink: Travels in the wilds of India*** by Vivek Menon. Penguin India, New Delhi, 1999. 294 pp, 20 b&w photographs Rs 250. This book looks at eleven animal species of India "that are in imminent peril, victims of human greed and callousness". The author has travelled extensively in the subcontinent. He looks at the "complexities of the animal kingdom and man's interaction with it" and provides "a wonderfully entertaining exploration of the lives of the rarest animals in India."
- ***Hybrid Histories: Forests, Frontiers and Wilderness in Western India*** by Ajay Skaria. Oxford University Press, New Delhi 1999. 323pp. An interesting study which examines the environmental and cultural histories of the Dangs in the forested regions of Western India. It provides significant insights in the history of three forest communities, the Bhils, the Koknis and the Varlis and into the complexities of the cultural and political elaboration of their concept of wildness. A precious, through at times highly academic, reading which can contribute to a better understanding of the intricacies of the relations between forest, people and wildlife. Devoid of any rhetoric or romanticism, *Hybrid Histories* is relevant to the debate on "people and wildlife".
- ***Kanha Tiger Reserve: Portrait of an Indian National Park*** by Carroll Moulton and Ernie J. Hulsey with a foreword by George B. Schaller. Vakils, Feffer & Simons Ltd. Mumbai 1999. 40 pp., 31 colour illustrations. "It is a combination of park guide, natural history, and personal reminiscence. As such the authors help create an awareness of Kanha's splendour and they provide valuable and intriguing information."
- ***Tiger Haven*** by Billy Arjan Singh, paperback published by Oxford University Press 1998. 237 pp, b&w photos. First published by Macmillan London Ltd., 1973—"the story of the work of one man, Billy Arjan Singh, to protect Indian wildlife in one small area"—'Tiger Haven' situated in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve. The author's observations "make fascinating reading, as does his account of his development from sportsman and farmer to conservationist and photographer".
- ***Lakshmi's Tale*** by Hugh Miles with Chip Houseman's diary entries and photos—the story of the tigers in Kanha they filmed for the BBC.
- ***Tigers claw back*** by David Nicholson-Lord photos by Michael Nichols. Both articles in *BBC Wildlife* magazine April 1999, 'Tiger, tiger burning out—or is it?' (vol.17 no.4). *BBC Wildlife Magazine*, Broadcasting House, Whiteladies Road, Bristol BS8 2LR, U.K.
- ***The State of the Tiger: India's tiger crisis***—a new report by the **Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)** focuses on the 'tiger state' of Madhya Pradesh as an example of the problems besetting the tiger. Information on a number of threats to tigers and their habitats in M.P. is presented, including diamond mines pumping waste into the water supply of a key tiger reserve, poaching being out of control, illegal tree-felling and massive timber scams worth millions of dollars, major industrial projects fragmenting tiger habitats and the murder of 37 forest staff in the state since 1992. The report also includes a round-up of the national situation regarding tigers in India since publication of their last report in October 1996 and of the international trade, documenting the results of EIA surveys of availability of tiger derivative products in Japan. At the report's release on 16

## Publications and Media

March 1999, EIA also screened a video visually depicting many of the issues witnessed by the EIA team who had visited M.P.

Report available from: EIA, 69 Old Street, London EC1V 9HX, U.K. Tel: (0171) 490 7040 Fax: 490 0436 E-mail: eiauk@gn.apc.org

- **Monitoring Tiger Populations in Protected Areas** by Vinod Rishi, CCF, North Bengal. A further contribution to the pugmark method of census, covering staff training, mapping tiger ranges, data processing and field verification. Includes information on tracing, measuring and analysing pugmarks for age and sex.

CCF, Nth. Bengal, Upper Nivedita Marg, Pradhan Nagar, Siliguri 734 403, West Bengal

- **The WWF Year for the Tiger**—the review for the year 1998, authored by Paul Toyne and published by WWF-UK presents "WWF's achievements in tiger conservation in 1998".

WWF-UK, Panda House, Weyside Park, Catteshall Lane, Godalming, Surrey GU7 IXR, Tel: 01483 426409, Website: www.wwf-uk.org

- **Wanted Alive: Tigers in the wild**—the 1999 WWF Species Status Report published by WWF- International is written by Peter Jackson and Elizabeth Kemf—a brief background of the tiger in history and culture, the history of tiger conservation in India, the threats faced by the tiger, the status of tiger in 1999 in all range countries and the efforts of WWF in tiger conservation.

WWF International, Avenue Du Mont-Blanc, CH- 1196 Gland, Switzerland. Tel.: +41 22 364 91 11, Fax: +41 22 364 58

- **A World Apart? Attitudes towards traditional Chinese medicine and endangered species in Hong Kong and United States** by Samuel Lee, Craig Hoover, Andrea Gaski and Judy Mills has been jointly published by TRAFFIC East Asia, TRAFFIC North America and WWF-US. 1998.

TRAFFIC North America, c/o World Wildlife Fund-US, 1250 24th Street, N.W., Washington D.C. 20037; Tel: (202) 293-4800; Fax: (202) 775-8287; E-mail: a@wwfus.org; Website: www.traffic.org

- **Tiger Safari: orientation centre at Sanjay Gandhi National Park**—the English script of the exhibits at the centre, includes most of the associated photographs and interpretative exhibits. Published by the Maharashtra Forest Department with a foreword by M.G. Gogate, C.C.F. (Wildlife), Maharashtra. "It is hoped that this booklet will be a useful document to know a bit more about the tiger and also perhaps be

useful for setting up more such Orientation Centres in various Project Areas in the country".

- **The Greater Common Good** by Arundhati Roy in *Outlook* 24 May 1999 and *Frontline* 4 June 1999. A powerful indictment of big dam 'development' and the massive cultural and ecological destruction entailed, with special reference to the Sardar Sarovar Dam of the Narmada Valley Development Project. "Big dams are to a nation's 'development' what nuclear bombs are to its military arsenal. They are both weapons of mass destruction.... They represent the severing of the link, not just the link—the understanding—between human beings and the planet they live on."

- **Warden Alert**—published by the Wildlife Protection Society of India. The first issue of this newsletter, designed for Honorary Wildlife Wardens (HWWs) and others engaged in the protection of wildlife, was published in January 1999. It aims to inform HWWs of wildlife law enforcement issues and other threats to conservation of wildlife. WPSI welcomes names and addresses of persons who will benefit from receiving a copy of this newsletter. WPSI, Thapar House, 124 Janpath, New Delhi 110001 Tel: 6213864 Email: wpsi.wildlife@gems.vsnl.net.in

- **NAWICOED News**, compiled by T.S. Gopal covers the 1998 activities of the Nagarhole Wildlife Conservation Education Project. It also has a short report on the Karnataka Tiger Conservation Project that was launched in January 1998, written by Praveen Bhargav. Available from: NAWICOED, P.B. No. 50, Srimangala, Kodagu 571217

- **A preliminary study of leopard ecology in the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Maharashtra, India** by Advait Edgaonkar and Ravi Chellam. Wildlife Institute of India, P.O. Box 18, Dehra Dun 248001. August 1998. The study was conducted between December 95 and July 96.

- **Envis: Wildlife and Protected Areas Bi-annual bulletin** published by the ENVIS Centre of W.I.I. The second issue, October 1998, edited by Biju Negi and Shomita Mukherjee is devoted to the "small cats of India".

ENVIS bulletin is available on the Internet and may be visited at the website: www.wii.gov.in. Wildlife Institute of India, PO Box 18, Dehra Dun 248 001, UP. Fax: (0135) 640117 E-mail envis@wii.gov.in



- **Signed and Sealed: The fate of the Asian elephant**, by Vivek Menon and Ashok Kumar published by the Asian Elephant Conservation Centre and Wildlife Protection Society of India. 1998. The report concentrates on information collected in Asia between June 1997 and December 1998 and particularly looks at "the probable impact on the Asian elephant of the proposed downlisting of three populations of the African elephant".

It traces the history of elephant poaching and ivory trade in India and covers other Asian range and consumer countries as well as regions used as transit routes for Asian ivory.

For further information contact: Asian Elephant Research and Conservation Centre, Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore 560 012, India; Tel: (080) 334012; Fax: 331 1280; E-mail: rsuku@ces.iisc.ernet.in

- **Biolog**—newsletter of IUCN's South and Southeast Asia Regional Biodiversity Programme. Each edition will explore one of the seven themes being addressed by the Regional Biodiversity Programme. The first edition edited by Nirmalie Pallewatta focuses on Participatory Management of Protected Areas.

For more information contact: Biolog, IUCN-The World Conservation Union, no. 48 Vajira Road, Colombo 5, Sri Lanka; Fax: 94 1 580202; E-mail: iucn-rbp@sltnet.lk

- **The Rhino & Elephant Journal**—vol. 12 December 1998, carries an article by Lucy Vigne and Esmond Bradley Martin on rhino conservation in Assam. Published by *The Rhino and Elephant Foundation*,

PO Box 381, Bedfordview, 2008, South Africa; E-mail: school@wildernesstrust.org.za.

- **Annual Report, 1997–1998**, of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India—activities of the Ministry with information on the present status of the natural resources of the country and the efforts made for their conservation, Environmental Impact Assessments and research, among other details. Also on the MoEF website.

- **'First 300 Days of Government': New Initiatives, New Programmes** published by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, January 1999, with a foreword by the Minister, Shri Suresh P. Prabhu. An update of the publication '125 Days of New Government: New Programmes and Initiatives' published in 1998.

- BBC television, U.K. presented a **'Tiger Season'** over the Easter weekend in early April 1999. **Chasing the Tiger**, "an investigative environmental film" by Jeremy Bristow focuses on the plight of tigers in Thailand and in Dudhwa NP, U.P. The **Tiger Special** by Chip Houseman and Hugh Miles follows a tigress and her three cubs in Kanha N.P., Madhya Pradesh. An episode of **A Really Wild Show** with Michaela Strachan focused on "the desperate situation facing tigers in the wild". Initially the BBC had discussed using these screenings to raise money for tiger conservation. Their late withdrawal from this scheme upset several of the NGOs who had been involved.

## Websites

[www.nic.in/envfor](http://www.nic.in/envfor)—the Ministry of Environment and Forests, India is now on-line. Their website includes information on the position of all forest and environment clearances.

[www.wildlife-vidarbha.org/index.htm](http://www.wildlife-vidarbha.org/index.htm)—Nagpur Forest Division. The site contains details of tiger reserves, national parks and sanctuaries like Pench, Bor, Nagzira, Tadoba-Andhari, Tipeshwar, Chaprala and Bhamragarh. It gives information also on eco-development and tourism in these areas as well as their publications.

[www.wild.allindia.com](http://www.wild.allindia.com)—site of Nirmal Ghosh, a Manila based writer/conservationist. Includes an illustrated report on the Rajaji National Park Gujjar relocations, posted after he visited Pathri at the end of December 1998.

[www.nbs.it/tiger](http://www.nbs.it/tiger)—a site hosted by NBS carries information of the Wildlife Protection Society of India.

[www.web.net/~pcarter/hazaribagh](http://www.web.net/~pcarter/hazaribagh)—website of Japan-based journalist Philip Carter which includes information on the Hazaribagh area of Bihar and the mining threat to the forests, people and wildlife of the area. Also posted are maps of the area showing wildlife corridors and proposed opencast mines, prepared by the Centre for Inter-disciplinary Studies of Mountain and Hill Environment (CISMHE) of Delhi University.

[www.wcmc.org.uk](http://www.wcmc.org.uk)—site of the Wildlife Conservation Monitoring Centre which works "towards the sustainable use of the Earth's natural resources by providing conservation data and services." WCMC also has sites giving information on coral reefs, the official Red Data List of animals and on CITES.

[www.wcmc.org.uk/CITES/english/text.htm](http://www.wcmc.org.uk/CITES/english/text.htm) gives the full text of CITES.

[www.iczn.org](http://www.iczn.org)—International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is the body responsible for providing and regulating the system for ensuring that every animal has a unique and universally accepted scientific name.

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*TigerLink* participants are encouraged to write to the Japanese Ambassador and/or Japanese Prime Minister (with a copy to the Chair of CITES Standing Committee) to request that the Japanese Government take immediate action to eliminate the trade in all tiger parts and derivatives, in line with their obligations under CITES and in consideration of the devastating effect that the trade is having on India's tiger and elephant populations.

<b>Mr. Hiroshi Hirabayashi</b>	<b>Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi</b>	<b>Mr. Rob Hepworth</b>
His Excellency the Ambassador Embassy of Japan 50-G Shantipath New Delhi 110 021	No. 6-1 Nagata-cho No. 1 Chome Chiyoda-ku Tokyo 100 Japan	Chair of CITES Standing Committee Tollgate House Houlton Street Bristol BS2 9DJ U.K.

*TigerLink News* is for private circulation, only to *TigerLink* participants. It records worldwide tiger news and information, some of which has come from participants and therefore represents their views. For any further details please write to the participants directly. We regret if any errors have been committed in the compilation of this document.

We thank *Save the Tiger Fund*, a special project of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in partnership with Exxon Corporation, for providing financial support for this publication. We also thank the *David Shepherd Conservation Foundation*, the *Tiger Action Fund for India* and the *Wildlife Conservation Society* for their ongoing support to the cause of tiger conservation and their help in facilitating the networking of *TigerLink*.

Produced by the Ranthambhore Foundation. Typeset and printed by S.J.I. Services, B-17 Lajpat Nagar Part 2, New Delhi 110 024. Compiled and edited by Joanna Van Gruisen with assistance from Uttara Mendiratta.