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The Jungle Express

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Tiger Shot
Dead Near
Kaziranga
Page 4

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Crowd which had gathered where the tiger was shot dead.

COVER STORY

3 **Man-eater Tiger Not Killed But Sent To Lucknow Zoo**

A wild Tiger is going to serve 'sentence' in captivity.

4 **Tiger Shot Dead Near Kaziranga**

People decide to declare the Tiger a man-eater.

WHAT'S ON THE GROUND

5 **Calls grow for Lawbreaker MLAs to be Punished**

Two politicians create havoc in Kaziranga NP.

WWF IN ACTION

6 **Sustainable agri(culture)**

Villagers understand green is in.

7 **Rescue Stories**

Orphans rescued from the wild.

9 **In the Land of the Red Panda**

New initiatives to save the Red Panda in Sikkim

10 **Meet the Team**

11 **Let's Talk About Them Too**

Beautiful wild animals of India, which never get talked about.

Man-eater tiger not killed but sent to Lucknow zoo

A WILD TIGER GOING TO SERVE 'SENTENCE' IN THE ZOO

by Nikita Aggarwal

A Tiger from the Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh (UP), faced a death sentence after it was declared a man-eater by the State Government. But before the bullet could hit, a dart did. The Tiger was successfully tranquilised and sent to the Lucknow zoo.

He had been on a killing spree since January this year and had already killed five (fed on two), injured one. This forced the Government to declare him a man-eater and a massive hunt was launched to catch him. Though efforts were being made to tranquilise him, but it looked like a lost battle as all attempts were failing. He was hiding in the sugarcane fields and it was near impossible to locate him in the tall crop.

With the killer Tiger lurking in the area, the villagers were angry and wanted to strike this time before he could. This meant the Tiger faced certain death.

Palia team of WWF had been involved in solving this crisis from the beginning. The team worked hard to placate the villagers, and ensured that the locals didn't act against the erring Tiger. Adequate compensation was also provided to the family of the victims.



THE TIGER LYING UNCONCIOUS IN THE CAGE.

Five out of the six patrolling vehicles, deployed to look-out for the Tiger were provided by WWF.

The UP Forest Department made one last attempt to tranquilise the Tiger and capture it alive. WWF provided a huge modern cage and five searchlights for the operation. A tranquilisation team was called in and the Forest Department and the WWF team started patrolling the area at night. Finally, on 1st March '09, the Tiger was found near a kill, a buffalo calf, and tranquilised and sent to the Lucknow zoo.

Explains Mr. Mudit Gupta, from the Palia office of WWF, "Tigers cannot differentiate between grass and sugarcane fields and could have been hiding in the tall grassy patches, looking for food. And would have attacked people when suddenly surprised by them. Such encounters are always ugly because even though humans are not their prey, but finding them

around, and so close, they attack them out of self defense".

Mudit also points out to the carcasses of cattle left by villagers here at the edge of the forests. And this particular Tiger was feeding on them. He got used to easy food.

Even though many are rejoicing that the life of this Tiger was saved, but it still means that the sanctuary will be poorer by a majestic animal!

Tiger shot dead near Kaziranga

PEOPLE DECIDED TO DECLARE A TIGER MAN-EATER.

by Ramesh Bhatta

A full grown male tiger was shot dead near Jakhlabandha, west of the Kaziranga National Park on 23 March 2009. The tiger had strayed out of the forests and had killed two and injured one.

The tiger had first killed a 50-year-old man on 19th March 2009. While the victim and his son were asleep, the tiger attacked the father. He succumbed to his injuries soon after. WWF had paid compensation to the victim's family hoping there won't be any

retaliation against the animal. But the tiger stayed back causing more trouble. And there were reports of sighting it in the vicinity of the village.

A team from WWF-India, WTI (CWRC, Kaziranga) and the Forest Department had been monitoring the tiger for last three days for its capture and relocation. It was found in Sakkhati Village near Jakhlabandha on the 23rd March. A mob gathered near the area where the tiger was spotted. While the team was trying to tranquilise it, the mob started chasing the tiger. The animal was cornered and it attacked two villagers, one of them was killed and another injured. There was utter chaos and a confused police force opened fire where Dr. Prasanta Boro from CWRC was hit!

WWF-India Kaziranga Karbi-Anglong Landscape

Coordinator Dr. Pranab Jyoti Bora and his team from WWF rushed the seriously injured Dr. Boro to the hospital and at present he is out of danger.

After half an hour the tiger was killed by team of police personnel headed by the Sub-Divisional Police Officer, Koliabor. It was shot from a close range with an assault rifle. Villagers were shown the carcass of the dead tiger and it was later shifted to the Burapahar range of Kaziranga NP for a postmortem.

It is a crisis in the making, with more and more tigers being killed by people. The locals' loss is driving them to zero tolerance levels towards wild animals and unsuspecting tigers get killed in retaliation.

This incident shows the tiger is not the only wild animal.



A POLICEMAN OBLIGING THE PHOTOGRAPHERS BY TILTING THE DEAD TIGER'S FACE.

Calls grow for lawbreaker MLAs to be punished

TWO POLITICIANS CREATE HAVOC IN KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

by Ramesh Bhatta



WWF AND OTHER NGOS PROTESTING NON-ACTION AGAINST THE MLAS

The world famous heritage site, Kaziranga National Park, was recently under attack. This time it was not poachers, but two local MLAs!

Jiten Gogoi and Kushal Duori, both militants-turned-politicians entered the Park and went on a rampage. When they were found fishing there, Mr. Dharanidhar Boro, one of the best rangers of the Park confronted them. But they chose to attack him for carrying out his duty.

Both the MLAs destroyed the Park's property, ransacked a wireless room and threatened the rangers by flashing their AK47s.

This forced the Forest and Tourism Department employees to go on an indefinite strike. They were joined by various NGOs including WWF-India. Our team with members from other NGOs- Aaranyak, Ecosystems

India, Early Birds and the Dolphin Foundation demonstrated in front of Dighali Pukhuri, Guwahati to show solidarity on the issue.

Though non-bailable warrants have been issued against the two, but the state police has been inactive and been content with declaring them as absconders. The Forest Minister and the Chief Minister of Assam assured of action against the two, but nothing has been done so far.

The NGOs demand the immediate arrest of the two accused. They have destroyed the sanctity of the Kaziranga National Park, one of the world's best managed Parks. A Park which has brought the rhinos back from extinction.

If the lawmakers will not respect the law, there is not much which hope for wild animals in Assam.

Sustainable agri(culture)

VILLAGERS UNDERSTAND
GREEN IS IN.

by Mudit Gupta



PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING A PRACTICAL SESSION DURING THE TRAINING.

Nature and wild animals have found friends in a group of farmers from villages around the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve. They are all ready to practice sustainable farming.

The Terai ArcLandscape is all bisected throughout with forested patches, villages and fields. Farmers here have been practicing unsustainable farming methods and their use of harmful chemicals for better yield has been poisoning the soil, destroying nature.

Therefore, WWF with the support from Center for Environment Education trained a group of keen farmers to start organic farming. These farmers, members of the Tharu community, a local tribe, have tilled the land here for many many years. Five of them from Maura and Balera villages of the North Sonaripur range and five from Bhagwant Nagar and Chaukhara,

from the south of the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, were taken to Allahabad for training.

During the training programme, participants were introduced to locally available resources to increase the fertility of soil. They were taught how they could get a better yield minus the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Demonstrations were also made using a model 'agro forestry in an integrated farming system' developed by Center for Continuing Non Formal Education on a small patch of land.

To boost their levels of income, the participating farmers were initiated towards poultry, piggery, pisciculture and mushroom farming and they were taught ways to market their produce well.

Rescue Stories

ORPHANS RESCUED FROM THE WILD

by Mudit Gupta



THE SPOTTED DEER CALF AFTER IT WAS RESCUED.

LOST DEER CALF FOUND A NEW FAMILY

A tiny, hapless spotted deer calf was rescued by WWF from the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve. The calf was unlucky and got separated from its mother.

When found by Mudit Gupta from WWF, the calf was being chased by a pack of dogs. The dogs would have certainly killed the calf, but there were other plans in store for it. It escaped unhurt and found a new family!

Though the team waited for its mother to come looking for her little one, but she did not. At that point it looked like the calf will never find its

family, but the happy and big hearted spotted deer mothers take in calves, even if they are not their own.

And so came in a new herd and the team decided to take a chance. And the calf was readily accepted in!

RESCUED LEOPARD CUBS- AN UPDATE

On the very cold morning of January 16th 2008, the Director of Dudhwa Tiger Reserve informed WWF about two leopard cubs, which were found lying in a trench at the edge of the forest.

WWF and the Park's Deputy Director then rushed to check on the cubs. They were just two weeks old. The team waited for about 13 hours for their mother to return, but there was no sign of her anywhere.

Time was running out as the cubs being so fragile had been in the cold for a long time. They were hungry too and the team decided to rescue them. They were then taken to the Reserve Director's home. There they were fed on goat's milk and kept warm.

Here they got their names too- Sharda and Suheli, the two major rivers of the area.

Later they were taken to the Lucknow zoo.

They are over a year old now and stay together. The girls are happy and growing up fast.



LEOPARD CUBS WHEN THEY WERE RESCUED.



NOW GROWN UP, SUHELI AND SHARDA AT THE LUCKNOW ZOO.

In the land of the red panda

NEW INITIATIVES TO SAVE RED PANDAS IN SIKKIM

by Priyadarshinee Shreshtha,
Basant Kumar Sharma and
Partha Sarathi Ghose

WWF has been working to conserve the red panda population in Sikkim since 2005. Work had been going in on in some PAs and now extensive surveys are being undertaken in Barsey Rhododendron Sanctuary, Fambang Lho Wildlife Sanctuary, Kyongnosla Alpine Sanctuary and Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary.

Primary phase of intensive survey initiated at Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary are in the process of completion. Our studies so far revealed that though prospective habitats are there on offer for the red pandas to utilize they are also subjected to innumerable threats from different sources directly or indirectly. Primary being the fact that their habitat is affected considerably through practices such as systematic collection of large and medium sized trees for use as fire wood and fuel wood and harvesting of bamboo for various uses. This is reducing the prime habitat required for the pandas. In addition, killing of red pandas by stray dogs around human habitats and army establishments is another area of concern. Other than this, lack of awareness among people around the sanctuaries is another area that has to be focused.



Conservation Initiatives

Reducing threats to red panda habitat

Based on the results of our field surveys we are planning to initiate extended conservation activities among local communities residing around the red panda habitats and starting with areas around Pangolakha WLS. Prior to initiation of the mitigation measures, rapid survey would be undertaken to ascertain the overall sociological status of the families living there. Based on the results, we would like to provide them with facilities that would enable them to curtail use of firewood and fuel wood and also the use of bamboo.

Awareness Generation amongst students and communities

Extending our effort to spread awareness among stu-

dents, with special impetus on the red panda, we would like to initiate campaigns in schools that are located in the villages around the PAs. Such campaigns will also be used for the locals living around the PAs.

Sensitisation of enforcement agencies around PAs

In addition to the villages, there are a number of army settlements, too, around a number of these PAs and also within them. Their activities like improper disposal of refuses lure feral dogs around these areas. In addition these, army units also go for patrolling within forests and tend to leave behind their waste. Keeping this in mind, regular sensitisation programmes for the army and the Sasastra Sema Bal units that operate in these areas are also conducted.

Meet the Team



MUDIT ON THE RIGHT WHILE GIVING COMPENSATION TO A VILLAGER.

Mudit Gupta works as a Senior Project Officer with WWF-India's Palia Field Office. With masters in Environmental Sciences from the University of Lucknow, Mudit has been working without rest to save the forests and wild animals of Uttar Pradesh for the last three years.

He concentrates on the Kishanpur-Dudhwa-Katerniaghat corridor which is a unique and threatened part of the Terai Arc Landscape.

To develop a disease free belt around this fragile corridor, Mudit has been getting the cattle here vaccinated and been organising camps for their treatment around the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve.

Since local communities are a part of this Landscape, he has been taking strong initiatives to uplift them. This would help to lessen their dependency on forests for survival.

He also supports the Forest Department in better management of the ecosystem, initiation and monitoring of conservation work and in controlling illegal wildlife activities. With this, he with his team conducts educational and awareness campaigns with school children.

It was his dream to work with WWF since he was a student. He says, "In the present scenario we have forgotten that there is something beyond the boundary of our city, which is brimming with life and nature and its destruction will only threaten our own exis-

tence".

Mudit has been saving many orphaned animals, has been solving disaster like situations and saving our world, for all of us.

We are all proud of him.

Let's Talk About

BEAUTIFUL WILD ANIMALS
OF INDIA, WHICH NEVER
GET TALKED ABOUT

by **Aishwarya Maheshwari**



© Dr. Yash Veer Bhatnagar

ters. Dense under-fur keeps it warm in the harsh winter conditions. Both the sexes have a dorsal stripe running from neck to tail. Males have thick, scimitar shaped horns, whereas females have thin, parallel horns. Males also sport a pointed beard.

A herd usually consists of 5-50 individuals, but larger assemblages have also been seen. Mothers give birth in summers when the food is in plenty. The young ones mature by the age of 8-12 months and start breeding when they turn 2 or 3 years of age.

With a shrill whistle-like alarm call, females alert their herd, which runs to safety from any danger. Males stay with their herds in early spring and summer, but as the summer progresses, they leave for inaccessible areas where they live alone or in small groups of 3-4 individuals.

The species is classified as vulnerable by IUCN and schedule I under IWPA and is threatened by habitat loss, fragmentation and poaching.

Asiatic Ibex

Kingdom: *Animalia*
Phylum: *Chordata*
Subphylum: *Vertebrata*
Class: *Mammalia*
Order: *Artiodactyla*
Family: *Bovidae*
Subfamily: *Caprinae*
Genus: *Capra*
Species: *Ibex*

A wild mountain goat, the Asiatic Ibex has a very similar looking cousin in wild goats (*Capra hircus*) in Pakistan.

The Ibex in India is found in higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. They prefer steep slopes and ground above tree line between 3,500 and 6,500 m from MSL. They sometimes migrate to lower elevations in winter. In spring they can be sighted low below the snow-line, attracted by new grass sprouting on the steep slopes.

Ibex's coat colouring changes with weather- its dark brown with irregular white patches in summers and yellowish white with a tinge of brown and grey in win-