



WCCB Newsletter

Quarter: July – Sept, 2022

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“The love for all living creatures is the most noble attribute of man.”



-Charles Darwin

From Additional Director's Desk

New Delhi: At the outset, I would like to convey my sincere thanks to all the enforcement agencies for working diligently and contributing towards saving country's wildlife heritage. I would like to thank them for their continued support to WCCB in fighting wildlife crime. I am also thankful to all the forest and wildlife personnel who put their lives at risk to save India's wild flora and fauna.



I would also like to highlight the relentless and courageous efforts of my team at WCCB in combating wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade. It is only with their dedication and commitment that WCCB has been able to bust several wildlife trade networks across the country, successfully.

As India's leading wildlife enforcement agency, WCCB is committed to end illegal wildlife trade, thereby preserving the wildlife heritage of India. As a central agency working for the cause of wildlife protection, WCCB has now become a pioneer wildlife protection agency and highly recognized amongst its global counterparts.

I am delighted to share 07th edition of WCCB Quarterly Newsletter. This newsletter, prepared by WCCB, is an effort to reach-out to all those engaged in fighting illegal wildlife trade. I also look forward to the valuable suggestions to help improve it further. Jai Hind!

— Mr. H.V Girisha, IFS, Additional Director, WCCB

Picture in Focus



Students of Kendriya Vidyalaya, Chennai, participating in an awareness program jointly organized by WCCB and MoEF&CC, to aware students about 'Cheetah Reintroduction' programme in India.

WCCB's participation in the 'Cheetah Reintroduction' programme

Sept, 2022: In a proud moment for us, WCCB team participated in the historical 'Cheetah reintroduction' programme held on 17th September, 2022, to bring Cheetahs back to India. WCCB team provided support in seamless passage of the big cats to India by acting as Assistant CITES Management Authority.

The team of WCCB Northern Region including Regional Deputy Director Sh. Ritesh Sarothiya and Wildlife Inspector Sh. Arnab Basu was among the first recipient of Cheetahs from Namibia at the Gwalior Airport. The team also issued necessary Wildlife NOC to the import consignment carrying 08 Cheetahs. All the eight big cats from Namibia made the long trek in a chartered cargo flight to the northern Indian city of Gwalior.



Cheetahs were once widespread in India and became extinct in 1952 due to hunting and loss of habitat. They remain the first and only predator to die out since India's independence in 1947. After going extinct in India over 70 years ago, the cheetah finally made a comeback in the country with a new reintroduction programme.

Eight cheetahs that arrived from Namibia to India consists of three male and five female. All the 08 big cats were released into India's Kuno National Park in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi was there to welcome the cheetahs to their new home. Spread over a 289-square-mile area, the Kuno National Park

is a sprawling sanctuary with preys like antelopes and wild boars for the wild cats. Each cheetah will be given a dedicated team of volunteers, which will monitor it and keep tab on their movement. Satellite radio collars have been put on each cheetah for their geolocation updates.



The release of the eight cheetah in India's Kuno is part of a larger plan to reintroduce the big cats to their former range. In January, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India had announced that the government planned to release 50 cheetahs into Indian national parks over the next five years.

There are now less than 7,000 cheetahs left in the wild, as per reports. Today, the species is found in southern and eastern Africa, particularly in Namibia, Botswana, Kenya, and Tanzania. In Asia, cheetahs are now confined to Iran, and comprise the subspecies *A. j. venaticus*, commonly known as Asiatic cheetah. The cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) is listed as "vulnerable" in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

The cheetah lives in three main social groups: females and their cubs, male "coalitions", and solitary males. While females lead a nomadic life searching for prey in large home ranges, males are more sedentary & instead establish much smaller territories in areas with plentiful prey and access to females. The cheetah is active during the day, with peaks during dawn and dusk. It feeds on small to medium-sized prey, mostly weighing under 40 kg (88 lb), and prefers medium-sized ungulates such as impala, springbok and Thomson's gazelles. The cheetah typically stalks its prey to within 60–70 m (200–230 ft), charges towards it, trips it during the chase and bites its throat to suffocate it to death. It breeds throughout the year. After a gestation of nearly three months, a litter of typically three or four cubs is born. Cheetah cubs are highly vulnerable to predation by other large carnivores such as hyenas and lions. They are weaned at around four months and are independent by around 20 months of age.

Enforcement Operations



Maharashtra: Joint team of WCCB & Maharashtra Forest Dept. seized 2587 piece of Paint Brushes made of Mongoose Fur from a Stationery Shop at Nashik, on 01-07-2022.

Uttarakhand: Joint team of WCCB, Uttarakhand Police and Uttarakhand Forest Dept. seized 02 Tiger skins and arrested 04 persons at Laksar area of Haridwar, Uttarakhand, on 07-07-2022.

Assam: 09 pieces of ivory (approx. 6 kg) were seized and 02 persons were arrested by joint team of WCCB and Assam Forest Dept., at Umshru area of Kamrup District, Assam, on 07-07-2022.

Tamil Nadu: Joint team of WCCB & Tamil Nadu Forest Dept. seized 02 pieces of Elephant ivory and arrested 09 persons at Mettupalayam in Coimbatore (T.N), on 08-07-2022.

Tamil Nadu: 35 kg. of Sea Cucumber concealed in a goods vehicle was seized and two persons were arrested by joint team of WCCB & Tamil Nadu Forest Dept. near Mandapam Outpost in Ramnad (T.N), on 21-07-2022.

Gujarat: Joint team of WCCB and Gujarat Forest Department seized one live Barn Owl and arrested two persons from Valsad, Gujarat, on 31-07-2022.



Enforcement Operations



Telangana: Joint team of WCCB and Telangana Forest Dept. seized 26 pieces of ivory artifacts viz. bangles, statues and pendants, etc. and arrested 02 persons, at Hyderabad, on 05-08-2022.

Uttar Pradesh: 295 live Indian Tent Turtles being carried in gunny bags in a bus were seized and one person was arrested by joint team of WCCB and STF, UP at Banthra on Lucknow-Kanpur Road, in the intervening night of 06 & 07 Aug, 2022.

Madhya Pradesh: Joint team of WCCB and M.P Police & Forest Department seized several wildlife articles viz. severed parts of Leopard skin & skull, and Wild Boar tusks and arrested 07 persons from Barhi area of Mandla (M.P), on 10-08-2022.

West Bengal: 33 live Parakeets were seized and 03 persons were arrested by joint team of WCCB and West Bengal Forest Dept. at Guma Pet Market in North 24 Parganas (W.B), on 14-08-2022.

Uttarakhand: joint team of WCCB, Uttarakhand Police and SOG, Uttarakhand Forest Dept. seized 12.5 Kg of Pangolin Scales & arrested 05 persons, in a two-day long operation conducted on 18 & 19 Aug, 2022, at Kashipur, Uttarakhand.

Andhra Pradesh: 146 pieces of dried Monitor Lizard genitals (Hatha Jodi) were seized and 02 persons were arrested by joint team of WCCB and Nagarjunasagar Srisailam Tiger Reserve at Srisailam, Andhra Pradesh, on 03-09-2022.



Enforcement Operations



Uttar Pradesh: Joint team of WCCB, UP Police STF and Uttar Pradesh Forest Dept. seized 04 kg Ambergris from Lucknow and arrested four persons, on 05-09-2022



West Bengal: Joint team of WCCB, DD Wildlife, and Kolkata Police seized 01 Snake Venom jar and arrested one person at Garfa, Kolkata (W.B), on 07-09-2022.



Assam: Joint team of WCCB, 27 BN SSB and Assam Forest Department seized 02 Elephant Tusks and arrested two persons near Jagiroad in Morigaon District of Assam, on 13-09-2022.

Gujarat: Joint team of WCCB and Gujarat Forest Dept. seized a Leopard skin and its carcass and arrested 07 persons, in a 2-day long operation conducted at Navsari, Gujarat, on 16/17-09-2022.

Tamil Nadu: In a major breakthrough, joint team of WCCB and T.N. Forest and Police Dept. seized 04 elephant ivory pieces and arrested 10 persons from various locations across Tamil Nadu, between 14 & 16 Sept, 2022.

Bihar: A joint operation of WCCB, Bihar Forest Department and 29 BN SSB, led to seizure of approx. 1.700 kg Pangolin Scale and arrest of 02 persons in Gaya (Bihar), on 26-09-2022.



Sensitization/Training Programmes

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) on regular basis organizes Capacity Building Training Programs for the enforcement officials of States/UTs such as Forest and Police authorities; Sensitization Programs for stakeholder agencies such as Border Guarding Forces, Customs, CISF, RPF, GRP, Coast Guards, Marine Police, Postal Dept, Railway Dept., and many others, and Awareness Programs for PRI representatives as well as communities living in/around the protected areas.

Several of such Capacity Building and Training Programmes for enforcement officials and officials of other stakeholder agencies were conducted during the quarter. Below is a pictorial glimpse of some activities:



WCCB conducts Inter-Agency Coordination Meets with Enforcement Agencies

As a part of its efforts towards combating wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade, WCCB regularly conduct Inter-Agency Coordination Meetings with law enforcement agencies across the Country. During these meetings, deliberations are held on the prevalent issues with respect to wildlife crime situation in the concerned State/UT. Such meetings serve as a major force multiplier in developing cohesion amongst different stakeholders in the States to fight the wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade.

Four Inter-Agency Coordination Meetings were organized by WCCB in this quarter, with notable participation from senior law enforcement officials from across the country. First meet of the quarter was conducted by WCCB at Hyderabad International Airport, Telangana, on 14-07-2022, which was chaired by the then Addl. Director, WCCB, Ms. Tilotama Varma. Another Inter-Agency Meet was conducted by WCCB at Raipur, Chhattisgarh, on

05-08-2022, under the Chairmanship of PCCF (Wildlife) & CWLW, Chhattisgarh.



The Bureau organized another coordination meet at Guwahati in Assam, under the chairmanship of PCCF (HoFF & CWLW), Assam, on 10-08-2022. The last meeting of the quarter was organized at Aurangabad, Maharashtra, on 27-09-2022. The meet was chaired by CCF(T), Aurangabad.

Senior Officials of law Enforcement Agencies viz. State Forest Department, Police Departments, WCCB, DRI, ED, Customs, CISF, IWST, NTCA, Zoological Parks and Tiger Reserves, CBI, BSF, RPF, SFSL, Forest, Prosecution Dept., Electricity Dept., Road Transport Department, etc. participated in the Inter-Agency Coordination Meetings held during the quarter.

WCCB conducted Quarterly RDD Meet, also bid farewell to outgoing Addl. Director

Aug, 2022: Wildlife Crime Control Bureau organized the Quarterly RDD Meet at its Bureau Headquarter in New Delhi, on 24th Aug, 2022. The meet was attended by Regional Deputy Directors (RDDs) of all the five Regional Offices of WCCB situated in various locations across the country. The meet was held to review the work done by regional office and discuss action plan for the coming quarter. The meet was chaired by the then Additional Director, Ms. Tilotama Varma and attended by all Senior official of the Bureau.

The Bureau also bid farewell to its outgoing Addl. Director, Ms. Tilotama Varma at the culmination of two-day long meet. An IPS Officer of 1990 batch, UP Cadre, Ms. Varma had joined WCCB on 27th Aug, 2015 on deputation and continued on the position for 7 years. Her term ended on 26th Aug, 2022.

Meanwhile, Senior IFS Officer, Mr. H.V Girisha who was holding the charge of Joint Director, was appointed the interim Additional Director of WCCB by the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change, Government of India.



Exit-Point Detections



WCCB examined a Customs referred baggage at Chennai International Airport, on intervening night of 11/12-08-2022. The consignment was found to contain 01 De Brazza Monkey (*Cerodipithecusneglectus*), 15 King Snake (*Lamproplitis* species), 5 Ball Python (*Python regius*) and 2 Aldabra Tortoise (*Aldabrachelysgigantea*).



WCCB inspected a consignment referred by DRI, Chennai and detected the exotic animals viz. 04 Tarsier Monkey, 02 Marmoset Monkey, 16 Blue Iguana, 25 Yellow Iguana, 100 Green Iguana, and 12 Bearded Dragon in check-in baggage of a passenger who had returned from Bangkok, at Chennai International Airport, on 23-08-2022.



WCCB provided identification support in detecting two dead Goeldi's Marmoset Monkeys found in check-in baggage of a passenger retuning from Bangkok, detained by Air Intelligence Unit, Chennai Air Customs, on 24-08-2022.



WCCB detected 05 Ball Pythons concealed inside the shoes kept in check-in baggage of a passenger arriving from Bangkok and detained by Air Intelligence Unit, Chennai Customs, on 03-09-2022.

US Smuggler Caught With 60 Snakes, Lizards And Reptiles In His Pants

Aug, 2022: A man who hid illicit cargo, and at other times had made border crossings himself. snakes and lizards in his trousers as he tried to sneak them into the United States

as part of a \$750,000 reptile smuggling enterprise faces decades in prison, officials said Wednesday.

Jose Manuel Perez master-minded the six-year scheme from his home in southern California, which involved bringing 1,700 animals into the United States from Mexico and Hong Kong.

In a plea deal with the Department of Justice, Perez acknowledged that he had paid mules to customs officers he was transporting some of his pet lizards

The animals that he netted, which included Yucatan box turtles, Mexican box turtles, baby crocodiles and Mexican beaded lizards, were sold to clients across the country for upwards of \$739,000, documents show.

His downfall came in March when he tried to drive from Mexico with 60 creatures secreted around his groin and in other parts of his clothing.

News Source: [ndtv.com](https://www.ndtv.com)

ASU Study: Over 1.1 million sea turtles poached in past 3 decades

Sept, 2022: The unlawful killing and trafficking of animals and plants, together with the climate issue, is one of the biggest dangers to wildlife biodiversity. The illegal wildlife trade is one of the world's most valuable clandestine enterprises, despite numerous laws prohibiting it.

Animals, particularly those from threatened and endangered species, are frequently exploited and sold for their pelts as well as utilized as food, medicine, aphrodisiacs, curios, and spiritual items. Researchers from Arizona State University predict that between 1990 and 2020, more than 1.1 million sea turtles were illegally killed and, in some cases, trafficked, according to a recent study published in Global Change Biology. Over the past ten years, up to 44,000 sea turtles have been exploited annually in 65 nations or territories and 44 of the 58 major sea turtle populations worldwide, despite the fact that there are laws in place that forbid their capture and usage.

Despite the apparently high number of turtles being poached, the analysis reveals a 28% drop in recorded unlawful exploitation of sea turtles over the previous ten years, surprising the researchers. At first, they anticipated a general rise in reported poaching.

According to Kayla Burgher, co-first author of the study and a doctoral student in ASU's environmental life sciences program in the School of Life Sciences, "The decline over the past decade could be due to increased protective legislation and enhanced conservation efforts, coupled with an increase in awareness of the problem or changing local norms and traditions."

The researchers discovered that, in addition to the minor drop, the majority of the recorded unlawful exploitation during the previous ten years took place in sizable, stable, and genetically varied sea turtle populations.....

News Source: [kairalinewsonline](https://kairalinewsonline.com)

Fox, Pythons seized in a wildlife smuggling haul at Thai airport

Aug, 2022: An Indian man has been arrested at Thailand's main airport attempting to smuggle out a menagerie of live creatures including a white desert fox and a raccoon.

Thailand is a major transit hub for wildlife smugglers — who often sell the animals to China and Vietnam, although recent months have seen an uptick in trafficking to India. Abilash Annaduri was found with 17 live creatures of six species, Thai wildlife officials said.

News Source: mblip.com

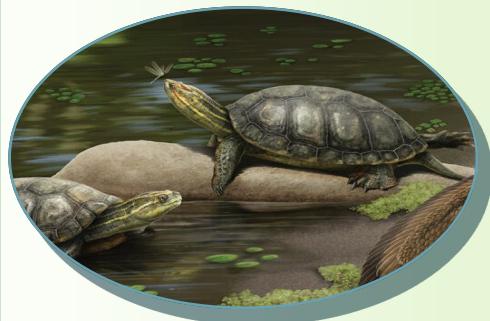
China Reverses Ban on Rhino Horns, Tiger Bones in Medicine

Oct, 2022: The Chinese government has reversed its 25-year ban on using rhinoceros horns and tiger bones for traditional medicine, a move that could lead to increased poaching and the growth of a black market, The New York Times reports. The country's State Council said it would legalize the use of rhino horns and tiger bones for "medical research or in healing," the newspaper reports, but only for "certified hospitals and doctors." The State Council also said horns and bones could only be used from rhinos and tigers raised in captivity, excluding zoo animals. According to Chinese medicine, rhino horns are used to treat "fevers, gout and food poisoning" and tiger bones are used to "boost health, cure a range of ailments and increase virility for men." The newspaper reports the remedies are "highly profitable" but have "no proven benefits to humans." The legalization of the two materials could lead to an increased demand for the fewer than 30,000 rhinos and 3,900 tigers who still live in the wild. Chinese officials did not explain their reversal of the 1993 ban, but experts told the Times the move was likely "related to the government's efforts to encourage the growth of traditional Chinese medicine"—which is reportedly a more than \$100 billion industry.

News Source: [thedailybeast](https://thedailybeast.com)

New Species of Giant Fossil Turtle Discovered in Alabama

Aug, 2022: Last week, a team of scientists announced the discovery of a new species of freshwater turtle that lived alongside the dinosaurs, 83 million years ago. The scientists who made this



discovery are Dr. Andrew D. Gentry of the Alabama School of Mathematics and Science in Mobile, Alabama, Dr. James F. Parham of the University of California Fullerton and Caitlin Kiernan of McWane Science Center in.....

News Source: opelikaobsvr.com

UNODC Concerned Nigeria is Primary Hub for Illicit Wildlife Products

Aug, 2022: According to UNODC's commercial trade in growing concern that recently launched World Wildlife Crime Report 2020, in 2019 alone, at least 51 tons of pangolin scales seized globally originated from Nigerian ports compared to only two tons in 2015.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) stated that Nigeria is notorious in particular for the global illegal trade in pangolin, sourced primarily from Central Africa, "in spite of efforts by the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), the enforcement authority responsible for the protection of endangered species of wildlife in Nigeria."

"Indeed, more than half of all seizures of pangolin scales worldwide could be traced back to Nigeria in 2019."

A statement issued by UNODC said, "Moreover, from around 2011, great volumes of rosewood, locally known as "kosso", were exported from Nigeria to Asia. In October 2018, the CITES Standing Committee recommended that parties suspend

"in the illicit ivory trade. Despite a global decline in trafficking in ivory since 2011, Nigeria has been identified in a growing number of incidents as part of the illegal trade chain, with 5,629 kg of ivory being seized in 2009-2011, compared to 11,769 kg in the period 2012-2014, to 12,211 kg in the period 2015-2017."

The Nigerian Govt., UNODC said "must be commended for its political will.....

News Source: thisdaylive.com

Supreme Court upholds Centre's advisory regarding import, possession of exotic live species in India

Aug, 2022: New Delhi: The Supreme Court has upheld the advisory issued by the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change regarding import and possession of exotic live species in India.

Recently, while hearing a plea challenging the legality and validity of the notification dated 11 June, 2020, a Bench of Justice Krishna Murari and Justice Hima Kohli stated, "We have gone through the judgments of the High Courts referred to above upholding the Advisory impugned herein and are in agreement with the same."

Referring to the judgment of the Allahabad High Court in the matter, the Bench stated, "Any interpretation to the contrary as suggested by the petitioner would defeat the very object of the Advisory. Once a declaration within the window of six months as provided

under the Advisory is made, the exotic live species, including its progeny, the declarant or transferee(s) are fully exempt from explaining the source of exotic live species. The exotic live species which is declared or its progeny, are not liable to confiscation or seizure by any Central Agency or State Agency. Consequently, the declarant or the transferee(s) of such declarant will be immune from prosecution under any civil, fiscal and criminal statute by any Central or State Agency. Any other interpretation would lead to absurdity."

Back in June 2020, the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change issued the advisory saying people importing "exotic live species" will have to make a voluntary disclosure.

The move came as the outbreak of COVID-19 raised global concern about It added that the registration will.....

News Source: firstpost.com

Disclaimer: News/information in the 'Major Global Development' Section has been taken from open source and WCCB holds no responsibility for its content. The news contents are not verified by Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) and thus will not be responsible for any loss to any person caused by inaccuracy in the information in any news item.

Celebration of 'Hindi Pakhwada' 2022

'हिंदी पखवाड़ा' 2022 का आयोजन

सितंबर, 2022: वन्यजीव अपराध नियंत्रण ब्यूरो द्वारा (डब्ल्यूसीसीबी) मुख्यालय में 14 सितंबर से 28 सितंबर, 2022 तक नई दिल्ली स्थित मुख्यालय में 'हिंदी पखवाड़े' का आयोजन किया गया। इस दौरान विभिन्न प्रतियोगिताओं जैसे निबंध, बहुविकल्पीय लिखित हिंदी प्रश्नोत्तरी, मौखिक परीक्षा, द्विभाषी अनुवाद, भाषण एवं सुलेख/श्रुतलेख प्रतियोगिता का आयोजन किया गया। 'हिंदी पखवाड़े' के दौरान 29 सितंबर, 2022 को समापन समारोह का आयोजन किया गया। अपर निदेशक श्री एच.वी. गिरीश के कर कमलों से विजेता प्रतिभागियों को प्रथम, द्वितीय, तृतीय पुरस्कार के साथ सभी आयोजित प्रतियोगिताओं के प्रमाण- पत्र भी बांटे गये। पखवाड़े के दौरान मुख्यालय के समस्त अधिकारियों एवं कर्मचारियों ने प्रतियोगिताओं में बढ़-चढ़ कर सहभागिता की।



विजयी प्रतिभागी



अपर निदेशक, श्री एच.वी. गिरीश 'हिंदी पखवाड़ा' के विजेताओं को प्रमाण पत्र प्रदान करते हुए।

Addl. Director visits Himachal Pradesh, attended strategic meeting to assist State in constituting Wildlife Crime Control Unit and High-Level Coordination Committee on Wildlife Crime and IWT



Addl. Director, Mr. H.V Girisha attended a strategic meeting at Shimla to assist Himachal Pradesh State authorities to constitute Wildlife Crime Control Unit and High-Level Coordination Committee on Wildlife Crime & Illegal Wildlife trade (IWT), as part of UNDP India-GEF funded Secure Himalaya project.

Addl. Director interacts with International wildlife Enforcement Authorities during curtain raising virtual meeting of 'Adaptive Leadership Challenge'



Addl. Director, Mr. H.V Girisha interacted with senior officials of wildlife Enforcement Authorities from more than 30 countries during the curtain raising virtual meeting of 'Adaptive Leadership Challenge Programme' organized by USFWS and INL, in NCTC Shepherdstown, West Virginia, U.S.A.

Students Outreach



WCCB organized a lecture on wildlife related issues for Veterinary Science Students of Sri. Venkateswara Veterinary University, Tirupati, on 16-07-2022, attended by 120 students.



M.Sc (Forensic Science) Students and Faculty of Kerala Police Academy attended an interactive session on wildlife crime related issues organized by WCCB, at Van Vigyan Bhavan, Delhi, on 19-07-2022.



70 Students of M.Sc. Biodiversity Department of Bhavans College, Mumbai attended a lecture on “Wildlife Crime Scenario in India and Illegal Trade in Wildlife”, organized by WCCB Official, on 06-09-2022.



WCCB conducted an interactive session for interns of the National Biodiversity Authority, Chennai and conducted sessions on activities of WCCB and biodiversity related issues, on 20-07-2022.

PRI/Awareness Programmes



WCCB and Odisha Forest Department jointly organized two Sensitization-cum-Awareness Programmes on prevention of online illegal trade in wildlife for PRI/Community Members living in/around Bhubaneswar and Satkosia Tiger Reserves on 20 & 21 July, 2022, respectively.



WCCB conducted a sensitization program on wildlife related issues for PRI members and villagers living in and around Desert National Park, Jaisalmer, at Girab Forest Range Office, on 27-07-2022.



WCCB and Chhattisgarh Forest Department jointly organized a Sensitization-cum-Awareness programme on wildlife crime related issues for PRI/EDC Members, at Achanakmar Tiger Reserve, Chhattisgarh, on 06-08-2022.



WCCB and Regional Office (SEZ), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change jointly organized an awareness program for Students about reintroduction of Cheetahs to India, at Kendriya Vidyalaya, Chennai, on 13-09-2022.

Asian Elephant

Scientific Name: *Elephas maximus*

Key Facts

Asiatic elephant is the largest surviving land mammal in Asia and is distributed throughout the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, from India in the west, Nepal in the north, Sumatra in the south, and to Borneo in the east.

The species is significantly smaller than its African cousin and has the highest body point on the head.

The back is convex or level.

An adult bull can weigh up to five tonnes. It is also distinguished by its smaller, more rounded ears.

Female Asian elephants usually lack tusks.

The feet have more nail-like structures than those of African elephants—five on each forefoot, and four on each hind foot. The forehead has 2 hemispherical bulges, unlike the flat front of the African elephants.

Unlike other mammals, where the legs are in an angular position, the elephant's legs are stacked in an almost vertical position under the body.

Threat

The greatest threats to Asian elephants are habitat loss, fragmentation, degradation, and illegal killing for their ivory and other products.

Hunting for ivory and skin are notable threats to the overall population of Asian elephant.

Their ivory is used in making ivory artifacts as well as in the manufacture of ornamental beads.

Asian elephants are also becoming vulnerable to rising human-wildlife conflicts (in retaliation).



Interesting Facts

Asian elephants are highly intelligent characterized by strong family bonds, sophisticated communication and complex behaviour, including tool use and the ability to feel grief and compassion.

These elephants live in herds, consisting of more than 20 females. The oldest female leads the group in its movement routes, searching for food and water source.

Their versatile trunks are equally capable of brute force (pushing over a tree in order to reach leaves on the inaccessible upper branches, for example) or performing a delicate task such as picking up a peanut.

Elephants can use low frequency sound waves for communication between members of the herd and individuals outside the herd. These sounds may carry for distances of up to 10 miles.

These elephants drink up to 200 litres of water per day.

Conservation Status

Asian elephants are listed in Schedule 1 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

The species is listed at Appendix I in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

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