



# WCCB Newsletter

Quarter: April – June, 2023

Issue: 10

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## From Additional Director's Desk

**New Delhi:** I would like to highlight the relentless, dedicated and courageous effort of our team at WCCB in combating wildlife crimes including illegal wildlife trade and for undertaking commendable wildlife operations during this period.

Their dedication towards the cause of wildlife is praise-worthy. WCCB was able to bust several wildlife trade networks across the country, successfully. I also take this opportunity to thank all the central and state enforcement agencies for their support in executing wildlife enforcement operations and appreciate their continued commitment. As India's leading wildlife enforcement agency, WCCB is committed to counter wildlife crimes across the country. WCCB is also committed to achieve excellence and aspire to be a world class Wildlife Enforcement Agency.

I hope you enjoy reading the tenth issue of WCCB quarterly newsletter. We look forward to your feedback for helping us improve upon our coming editions. Best wishes to you and your families. Jai Hind!



“Wild animals are less wild and more human than many humans of this world”



— Munia Khan

## Picture in Focus



*65 villagers living in and around the Amrabad Tiger Reserve, Telangana, were sensitized by WCCB team about illegal Wildlife Trade activities on 26-06-2023.*

# Enforcement Operations



**Maharashtra:** 50 Tonnes of raw Capiz shells and crushed powder were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Alibaug Forest Division, at Taloja Industrial Area, Navi Mumbai, on 03.04.2023.

**Rajasthan:** 20 Star Tortoises were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Udaipur Forest Division, at Udaipur, Rajasthan on 06.04.2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Madhya Pradesh:** 1 leopard skin was seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Police Department of Madhya Pradesh, at Bichhiya, Mandla district, Madhya Pradesh on 16-04-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



**Uttarakhand:** 5.8 Kgs of Pangolin Scales were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB, Police and Forest Department of Uttarakhand, at Madho Tanda road, Maalpur ghadi, Khatima, Uttarakhand on 22-04-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Ladakh:** 62 Nos. of Shahtoosh shawls were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Leh Wildlife Division, UT of Ladakh, at Leh on 23rd and 24th April, 2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



**Assam:** 4.4 kgs dry pangolin scales were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Assam Forest Department, at Golaghat, Assam on 26-04-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Delhi:** One Elephant Tusk was seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and CBI, at Delhi on 30-04-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



**Goa:** 120 Nos. of Parakeets were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Goa Forest Department at Verna, Goa on 07-05-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



# Enforcement Operations



**Bihar:** One Tiger skin was seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Gaya Forest and Police Department at Gaya, Bihar on 03-05-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Rajasthan:** Six Elephant Tusk were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Rajasthan Forest Department, at Pilani, Rajasthan on 04-05-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Punjab:** Joint team of WCCB and Punjab Forest Department seized 186 Shahtoosh Shawls at Pathankot and Amritsar, Punjab on 09-05-2023 and 10-05-2023.



**Maharashtra:** 11 Whiskers, 4 Canine teeth, 6 Claws, 4 molar/ premolar teeth of Tiger/Leopard were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Maharashtra Forest Department, at Chandanpuri, Maharashtra on 19-05-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Assam:** 03 pcs of Elephant ivory were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Dhemaji Forest Range, at Achipothar village, Dhemaji, Assam on 31-05-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**West Bengal:** 01 live Indian pangolin was seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Kharagpur Forest Division, at Kharagpur, West Bengal on 30-05-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



**Odisha:** 12 sea fan articles, hatta jodi, musk pod and fox skin were seized in a operation conducted by Odisa Forest Division at Chandka, Odisha on 02-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Arunachal Pradesh:** One Clouded Leopard dry skin was seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Mobile squad, Western Arunachal, and Bomdila Forest Division, Arunachal Pradesh at East Kameng, Arunachal Pradesh on 07-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



# Enforcement Operations



**West Bengal:** 933 pcs of dried Kingfisher body with beak, 180 pkt of peafowl feather and 57 nos. of Grey Jungle fowl body with feather were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and 24 Parganas (South) Forest Division at Bejpukur village, Dist- 24 Parganas (South), West Bengal on 01-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



**Kerala:** 19 live Hill myna and 01 live Alexander parakeets were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Kerala Forest Department at Thamallakal Haripad, Kerala on 12-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Chhattisgarh:** One Leopard skin was seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Chhattisgarh Forest Department at Surajpur Chhattisgarh on 11-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Chhattisgarh:** 3.4 kgs of Pangolin Scales were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB, M.P. and Chhattisgarh Forest Department at MP Chhattisgarh border at RO Khod, Tamor Pingla sanctuary on 12-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



**West Bengal:** 2 live Tokay geckos were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and 24-Parganas North Forest Division at Berachampa, Deganga, West Bengal on 14-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Tamil Nadu:** 02 Cow head Shells (Cassis Cornuta) and 12 Pieces of Coral were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Tamil Nadu Forest Department at Melaratha veethi / 15 West car street, Rameswaram, Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu on 14-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Tamil Nadu:** Two Deer antlers were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Tirunelveli Forest station team at Ambasamudharam, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu on 16.06.2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



**Andhra Pradesh:** Fire Corals, Sea shell and suspected Monitor Lizard oil were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Andhra Pradesh Forest Department at Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh on 28-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

**Uttar Pradesh:** 108 Indian Tent Turtles were seized in a joint operation conducted by UP STF and UP Forest Department at Nakkas Chowk, Lucknow on 22-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.



**Tamil Nadu :** Three Elephant Pearls were seized in an Operation conducted by WCCB and TN Forest Department at Kodambakkam, Chennai on 19/06/2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

# Sensitization/Training Programmes

WCCB conducted awareness program for Custom Brokers, Importers and Customs officers on “ WCCB's (DICS) and prevention of illegal wildlife trade, CITES, WCCB's role in Cargo” at Air Cargo Complex, Chennai on 06-04-2023.



WCCB officials took two sessions on the topic of " wildlife crime in northeast and identification of wildlife species" in a workshop organised by 64th Bn SSB Daranga on 12-04-2023. 51 officials attended the programme.



WCCB conducted a Capacity Building Training Program with Gorumara Wildlife Division of West Bengal from 20-4-2023 to 21-04-2023 at Aranya Bhawan, Jalpaiguri.



WCCB official conducted a sensitization program on wildlife crime scenarios, illegal wildlife trade, wildlife crime modus operandi, CITES etc for Forest officials at Karnataka State Forest Academy Dharwad, Karnataka on 24.04.2023.



WCCB conducted a Capacity Building Training Program with FDCM for the State Forest & Police Personnel, at the Conference Hall, FDCM Head Office, Nagpur, Maharashtra on 11-05-2023 and 12-05-2023.



WCCB official delivered lecture in an Induction Course for the Newly recruited Preventive Officers & Inspectors of Customs organised by NACIN, Mumbai at Mumbai on 15-05-2023.



WCCB official conducted a sensitization program in collaboration with Aranyak NGO at Anini, Arunachal Pradesh on 22.05.2023. 25 officials from ITBP, Indian Army, GREF and SIB participated in the programme.



WCCB official conducted a sensitization program in collaboration with Aranyak NGO for ITBP and PRI members at Tezu, Arunachal Pradesh on 24.05.2023. 42 persons participated in the programme.

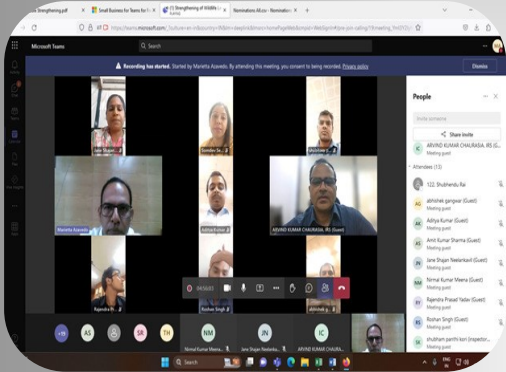


# Sensitization/Training Programmes



WCCB conducted a 2-day Capacity Building Program with WWF-India and Valmiki Tiger Reserve of Bihar for State Forest Department at Manguraha Conference Hall, Bettiah, Bihar on 23rd and 24th May, 2023, attended by 50 forest officers

WCCB conducted a 2-day Capacity Building Program for Police, Customs, Indian Coast Guard & Forest officials at Indian Coast Guard Training Centre, Kochi, Kerala on 25th and 26th May, 2023, attended by 40 officials.



DD(C&T), WCCB delivered session on "Strengthening of Wildlife Law Enforcement" for customs officers in a virtual training workshop organized by NACIN, Mumbai on 30/05/2023

WCCB official conducted a sensitization program for newly appointed inspector of CGST, CGLE 2019 & 2020 Batch at NACIN Kochi, Kerala on 29.05.2023.



WCCB official conducted a sensitization program on identification of wildlife article and modus operandi of smuggling by trains for RPF officials at RPF Training Centre, Domohani, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal on 27.05.2023.

WCCB official conducted two half day sensitization program and delivered session on identification of wildlife samples for SSB officials at 44Bn SSB Narkatiyagan and 65Bn SSB Bagha under Sector Head Quarter SSB Bettiah Bihar on 25.05.2023.



WCCB official conducted a sensitization program for Forest Range officer Trainees, TSFA, Dulapally, Hyderabad at ICFRE, New Delhi on 02.06.2023.

WCCB official conducted a sensitization program for newly appointed inspectors at NACIN Faridabad, Haryana on 12.06.2023. 64 officials attended the Program.



# Sensitization/Training Programmes



WCCB official conducted a workshop at 41Bn SSB Ranidanga, West Bengal on 13.06.2023. 60 officials attended the Program.



WCCB official conducted a half day workshop for BSF officials at Sector Headquarters BSF Raninagar, West Bengal on 14.06.2023. 36 BSF officials attended the Program.



WCCB official conducted a half day workshop for SSB officials at Sector Headquarters 17 Battalion, SSB Falakata, West Bengal on 14.06.2023. 56 BSF officials attended the Program.



WCCB official conducted a half day workshop for SSB officials at 53 Bn SSB Simlabari, Assam on 15.06.2023. 46 SSB officials attended the Program.



WCCB official conducted a half day workshop for BSF officials at BOP Hauth belonging to 129 BN BSF on 15.06.2023. 66 BSF officials attended the Program.



WCCB official conducted two sensitization program for CISF officials involved in examination of passenger's ships travelling between Kochi to Lakshadweep at Cochin, Kerala on 06.06.2023 and 15.06.2023.



WCCB official conducted a half day workshop for BSF officials at 117 BN BSF, Murshidabad, West Bengal on 19.06.2023. 63 BSF officials attended the program.



WCCB officials conducted a sensitization program for the State Forest Service Officer Trainees of CASFOS, Coimbatore at Van Vigyan Bhawan, R.K.Puram, Delhi on 20.06.2023.

# Sensitization/Training Programmes

WCCB official conducted a workshop on wildlife smuggling in North Bengal for SSB officials at SHQ SSB at Jalpaiguri, West Bengal on 22.06.2023.



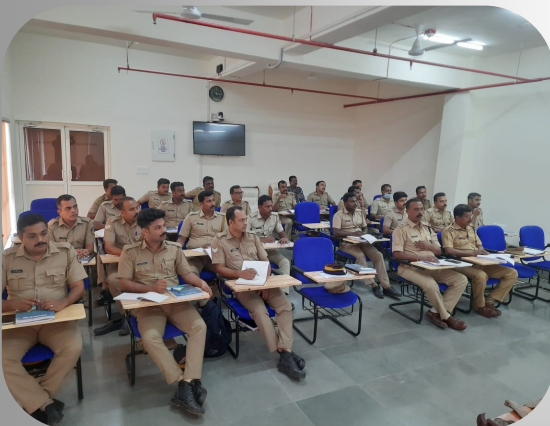
WCCB official conducted a half day workshop for BSF officials at 5 BN BSF, Kalyai, West Bengal on 23.06.2023. 122 BSF officials attended the Program.



WCCB conducted a 2-day Capacity Building Program with Madhya Pradesh Forest Department for officials of State Forest and Police Department at Pench Tiger Reserve Seoni, MP on 22nd and 23rd June, 2023



WCCB officials conducted a sensitization program for the Forest Officials of Andhra Pradesh at Markapur, Nagarjunasagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR) on 27.06.2023.



WCCB conducted a 2-day Capacity Building Program with Wildlife wing of Nagaland for officials of State Forest Department at State Environment & Forest Training Institute, Dimapur, Nagaland on 27th and 28th June, 2023





## Institutional Programmes

# WCCB celebrates World Environment Day

**June, 2023:** On the occasion of World Environment Day, 2023, WCCB conducted Beach Cleaning Drive with CISF staff at Fort Kochi, sensitization program with WAKE (Welfare Association of Kendriya Bhavan) at the Kendriya Bhavan, Kochi and sensitization program at Navy Training Center, Naval Base, Ernakulam, Kerala.

**June 2023:** On the occasion of World Environment Day, 2023, WCCB Ramnad Border Unit participated in Mangrove plantation activity in Kunthukul village, Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve, Pambam, Ramnad, Tamil Nadu on 05.06.2023.

**June 2023:** On the occasion of World Environment Day, 2023, RDD, WCCB SR delivered lecture on "Effect on Plastic Pollution on Wildlife" and "Illegal Wildlife Trade" at the Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, Chennai. 150 students of LLB final year attended the program.

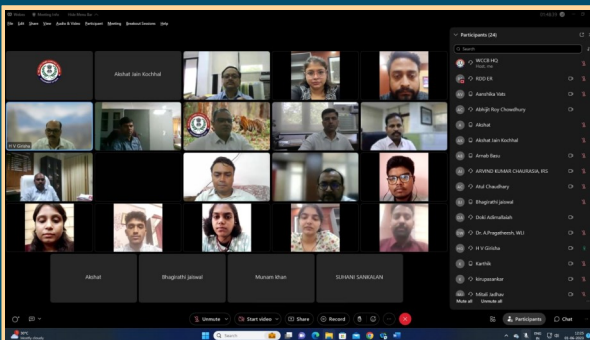


## WCCB Conducts Hindi Workshop

**June, 2023:** २१-०६-२०२३ को एक हिंदी कार्यशाला का आयोजन डॉ. मनोज कुमार, जेडी(आई/सी) की अध्यक्षता में डब्ल्यूसीसीबी मुख्यालय, नई दिल्ली के सम्मेलन कक्ष में किया गया कार्यशाला आयोजित करने के लिए श्री प्रेम सिंह, सेवानिवृत्त संयुक्त निदेशक, राजभाषा विभाग को आमंत्रित किया गया था उन्होंने "सरकारी कार्यालयों में राजभाषा हिंदी की उपयोगिता एवं कार्यान्वयन हेतु सुझाव" विषय पर व्याख्यान दिया जिसमें मुख्यालय तथा उत्तरी क्षेत्र, मध्य क्षेत्र के समस्त अधिकारी ओर कर्मचारियों ने भाग लिया ।



## WCCB organizes Summer Internship Programme



WCCB organized summer Internship Programme 2023-24 3rd June, 2023. The program was inaugurated by Additional Director, WCCB, Sh. H.V Girisha. All senior officers of WCCB and Interns from across the country participated in the programme. Senior officials of WCCB also interacted with the participants and apprised them of wildlife crime related issues.

The month long WCCB Internship Programme intends to inculcate knowledge and motivate Students and Researchers in the field of Wildlife Crime and Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT). Interns having had deep insight in the field of wildlife crime and IWT are expected to be eyes and ears of WCCB. During the program, they are made aware of the national and international scenario in wildlife crime and IWT. Each intern is assigned a specific topic to study, to prepare a report and give a power point presentation, under the supervision of senior officials of WCCB.

Under the guidance and supervision of Sh. H.V Girisha, Additional Director the program has further evolved and streamlined to benefit both the organization as well as the interns. The Bureau officials are consistently endeavoring to improve the structure and design of internship program to make it more beneficial to the interns, WCCB, and to the cause of wildlife conservation at large.

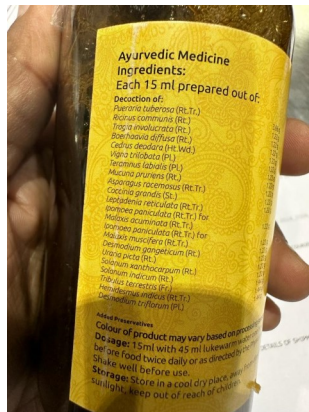
# Exit-Point Detections



WCCB team examined the Check in luggage (Trolley bag) of two passengers bound for Bangkok through AirAsia flight on 16/06/2023. On examination, 219 & 150 No. of Star Tortoises were found inside the trolley bags packed with pillow cover at Chennai Airport..



WCCB team examined a consignment of 6,850 live red-eared sliders, a species of turtle, from two male passengers who arrived at the Tiruchi international airport from Kuala Lumpur by an Air Asia flight on 23-06-2023.



WCCB team examined a illegal export consignments of Ayurveda products that contained restricted herbals were seized in a joint operation conducted by WCCB and Customs Department at Delhi on 07-06-2023 and 09-06-2023. Intelligence was developed by WCCB.

## Visits/Representations

### Addl. Director attended as alumni in ICCA Training



**Additional Director, WCCB, Mr. H.V. Girisha attended ICCA Training at Bangkok, Thailand from 20th to 22nd June, 2023 as an Alumni.**

## PRI/Awareness Programmes



**WCCB & NGO Aaranyak jointly organized a PRI Sensitization Programme on wildlife crime related issues at Kheroni Higher Secondary School, Kheroni, Karbianslong, on 24-04-2023, attended by 95 persons including NGO Members, Village Pradhans & School Teachers and Students.**



**WCCB & NGO Aaranyak jointly organized a PRI Sensitization Programme on wildlife crime related issues at Dhansiri auditorium hall Karbianslong, on 25-04-2023, attended by 78 persons including local villagers, village pradhan, local NGOs an VDP secretary.**



**WCCB official conducted a sensitization program in collaboration with Aranyak NGO for ITBP and PRI members at Tezu, Arunachal Pradesh on 24.05.2023. 42 persons from ITBP, PRI members including Village Pradhans participated in the programme.**



**WCCB official conducted a sensitization program in collaboration with Telangana Forest Department and WCS Hyderabad for PRI members and villagers at Thurkapally village, Amrabad Mandal, bordering Amrabad Tiger Reserve of Telangana on 26/06/2023.**

## 29वीं वाहिनी सशस्त्र सीमा बल एवं वन विभाग की संयुक्त कार्रवाई में बाघ की खाल बरामद



**गया (रासांस) :** 29 वीं वाहिनी सशस्त्र सीमा बल के कमांडेंट एच. के गुप्ता एवं डी.एफ.ओ श्री राजीव रंजन कुमार के निर्देश पर सशस्त्र सीमा बल इ कंपनी बीबीपेसरा, फॉरेस्ट डिपार्टमेंट गया, वन्य प्राणी नियंत्रण ब्यूरो कोलकाता एवं बिहार पुलिस थाना टिकारी के संयुक्त ऑपरेशन में टिकारी ब्लॉक रोड से एक अल्टो कार से तस्कर के साथ बाघ की खाल बरामद की गई है। वन्य प्राणी नियंत्रण ब्यूरो कोलकाता से मिली आसूचना के आधार पर कार्रवाई की गई। खबर थी कि कोई व्यक्ति बाघ की खाल की डिलीवरी टिकारी थाना क्षेत्र में करने वाला है। इसी के आधार पर संयुक्त टीम अपना जाल बिछाकर तस्कर को रंगे हाथ पकड़ने में कामयाब हासिल की। एसएसबी बीबीपेसरा के सहायक कमांडेंट रामवीर कुमार ने बताया कि वन विभाग गया के साथ यह सफल ऑपरेशन किया गया है जिसकी निगरानी कमांडेंट 29 वी वाहिनी एवं डीएफओ गया का द्वारा की जा रही थी। टिकारी का रहने वाला तस्कर कुंदन कुमार अपने साथियों के साथ मिलकर इसे अंजाम दे रहा था। जिसे बिना मौका दिए टीम ने धर दबोचा। तस्कर के ऊपर वन्य प्राणी सुरक्षा अधिनियम 1972 के तहत फॉरेस्ट ऑफिस गया में मामला दर्ज किया गया है। पूर्व में भी बाराचट्टी एरिया से सशस्त्र सीमा बल 29 वी वाहिनी ने बाराचट्टी वन विभाग के साथ मिलकर पैंगोलिन के स्केल बरामद किया गया था।



जयपुर 05-05-2023

## हाथी दांत तस्करी में लिप्त गिरोह के 3 जने गिरफ्तार

**पिलानी (झुंझुनू) |** पुलिस ने हाथी दांत की तस्करी में लिप्त गिरोह के तीन युवकों को गिरफ्तार कर इनके कब्जे से छह हाथी दांत बरामद किए गए हैं। आरोपी युवक पिलानी के खेड़ला में हाथी दांत की सप्लाय करने आ रहे थे। बरामद हाथी दांत की अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार में 80 से 90 लाख रुपए कीमत बताई जा रही है। वाइल्ड लाइफ कंट्रोल ब्यूरो दिल्ली की सूचना पर डीएसटी व पुलिस ने संयुक्त रूप से कार्रवाई करते हुए तस्करों को पकड़ा। एसपी मुदुल कच्छावा के अनुसार पिलानी में हाथी दांत तस्करों द्वारा बड़ी डील करने की सूचना मिली थी। आरोपी मनीष



पुलिस की गिरफ्त में हाथी दांत तस्कर।

## उदयपुर: पैंथर खाल तस्करी मामले में दो शिकारी और पकड़े

**उदयपुर |** पैंथर के शिकार और खालों की तस्करी के मामले में एसओजी ने दो और शिकारियों को गिरफ्तार किया है। इस मामले में अब तक 7 जनों की गिरफ्तारी हो चुकी है। एसओजी ने बुधवार को गोदारा, सायरा निवासी मीठाराम गरासिया और पीपला, थाना बाली, जिला पाली निवासी मोहन गरासिया को गिरफ्तार किया। ये दोनों रणकपुर के जंगल में पैंथर का शिकार करते थे।

On May 12, the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) and the Punjab forest department obtained 186 *shahtoosh* shawls from shops in Amritsar and Pathankot. Earlier, on April 23 and 24, the WCCB and Ladakh's forest officials seized 213 *shahtoosh* shawls from traders in Leh, said sources.

## Wildlife Crime Control Bureau seizes fake elephant pearls, 369 star tortoises

June has been a busy month for the bureau; four persons arrested for trying to sell an article claiming it to be elephant pearls; star tortoises rescued from passengers going to Bangkok

June 23, 2023 08:27 pm | Updated 08:27 pm IST - CHENNAI

THE HINDU BUREAU

COMMENTS SHARE

READ LATER

### The Hindu Foundation Day Sale

Up to 45% off on annual plans to celebrate 145 years of The Hindu!

SUBSCRIBE & SAVE

The Tamil Nadu Forest and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau had a busy June in city with authorities seizing 369 star tortoises, two elephant tusks, and intercepting trade of "fake elephant pearls" in separate cases over the last three weeks.

Four persons were remanded for trying to sell an article claiming it to be elephant pearls (gajamuthu) on June 19, said E. Prasanth, Wildlife Warden, Chennai. According to Mr. Prasanth, the items are most likely to be fake but they have been sent to the Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation in Vandalur to ascertain their veracity.

*Shahtoosh* shawls are made out of the fur of the *chiru* or the Tibetan antelope, a species that has faced a huge population decline due to hunting, and is afforded the highest legal protection in India.

#### The illegal *shahtoosh* trade

The high mountain reaches of the Tibetan plateau in some parts of China, Bhutan and India are home to an antelope slightly larger than a goat: the *chiru*, or Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*). While the animals have soft underfur, or *shahtoosh*, that helps them survive in the cold harshness of the Himalaya, this fur is also its bane. Weavers fashion *shahtoosh* into luxury shawls; and the only way to lay your hands on *shahtoosh* is to kill a *chiru*.

As per some estimates, it takes the underfur of three or four dead *chiru* to make a single, pure *shahtoosh* shawl. *Chiru*, therefore, were hunted extensively. According to one estimate, their

# Indian Star Tortoises

*Scientific Name: Geochelone elegans*

### Key Facts

The Indian star tortoise is a threatened tortoise species native to India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka where it inhabits dry areas and scrub forest.

They have mostly tan skin on their head, limbs, and tail but may also be marked with dark spots. Their thick legs are covered in tubercles, which are scale-like perturbances.

Indian star tortoise's limbs and head are small enough to pull inside its shell in case they are faced with predators.

They can live up to 80 years with the right care, however, they usually live to around 50 years of age.

Their shell grows tall and is very rounded in shape which is another distinctive feature when compared to the shells of other tortoises which are often more flat.

The Indian star tortoise size varies from 7-12 inches long, with females growing to the larger end of that range and males generally staying on the smaller side.

Males also have longer and thicker tails than females and, if you look at the underside of their shell, you will notice that the male's plastron is slightly concave



### Interesting Facts

Its name comes from the star-like patterns that feature on its high-domed shell. Because of these very distinctive patterns and its highly rounded shell, the Indian star tortoise is popular in the world's trade in exotic pets.

The attractive markings on its shell, aside from looking very pretty, serve to help this tortoise more easily blend in with its surroundings, by breaking up the hard edge of the shell, so when the tortoise is grazing, it is not so obvious to predators passing by.

The Indian star tortoise is diurnal and mostly active in the morning and late afternoon. They are traditionally herbivores eating leaves, berries, flowers, and fruit; however, in cases of scarce food, they can be seen eating carrion. During abnormal hot or cold stints, they will become inactive and not eat for long periods.

### Threat

A large number of specimens of this species are found in the illegal wildlife trade in India. The main threats to the Indian star tortoise is the illegal pet trade and habitat destruction.

### Conservation Status

Indian Star Tortoises are listed in Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

The species is listed in Appendix I of CITES.

It is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.

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