



WCCB Newsletter

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Member Secretary, CZA**

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From Additional Director's Desk

New Delhi: At the outset, I would like to wish all the readers 'A Very Happy 2022'. Pray and hope that this year brings good health, happiness and joy to all. The preceding year was full of challenges both from COVID-19 as well as emerging new patterns of wildlife crime. Despite challenges posed by COVID-19, WCCB was able to crack down on illegal wildlife activities and bust several wildlife trafficking networks throughout the country, successfully. I appreciate the effort of my team and that of the other Enforcement Agencies who joined us in all the wildlife operations pan India and convey my sincere thanks to all for their continued support.



As the Nation celebrates and commemorates 75 years of its Independence as 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', I would like to put-on-record the relentless work of the Enforcement Agencies of the country in protecting the wildlife heritage of India by successfully cracking down on the illegal wildlife activities. We will continue to put our 'Nation First' in all our future endeavors. We vow to relentlessly fulfil the aspirations and desires of multitudes to have a world free of wildlife crime.

This issue highlights some important activities undertaken by WCCB besides giving a birds-eye view of all the major wildlife operations conducted by the Agency. We hope you enjoy reading this issue and look forward to your feedback for the coming editions. Jai Hind!

— Smt. Tilotama Varma, Additional Director, WCCB

Picture in Focus



Members of the 'Santhal Tribal Community', performing their popular tribal dance, during a PRIsensitization programme and plantation drive organized by WCCB for the Santhal Community, at Birbhum District in West Bengal, on 08-12-2021

"When a man has pity on all living creatures then only is he noble."

-Buddha

Zoos As Potential Centres For Imparting Education On Wildlife Crime Including Illegal Trade

The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) is a statutory body of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India. It was established in 1992 to groom Indian Zoos to be premium ex-situ facilities with established linkages to in situ conservation. The mission is to facilitate and advance professional animal management practices in Indian Zoos through technical cooperation, and to empower Zoos with the necessary capacity to promote awareness and further the conservation of threatened Indian wildlife. This is executed through policy-level decisions to regulate functioning of Indian Zoos.

Zoos in India are governed under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, the National Zoo Policy, 1998, Recognition of Zoo Rules, 2009 and various guidelines formulated by the CZA. These provide a statutory framework of standards and norms for management of Zoos in the country. As on December 2021, there are 147 zoos in the country recognized by the CZA under the Section 38 H(1) of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

In addition to statutory functions, the CZA also provides financial assistance to conservation breeding programs and infrastructural upgradation in Zoos. Recognizing the need for the conservation of the threatened species, the Central Zoo Authority has identified 74 species of

indigenous fauna for focused conservation breeding which includes 46 mammals, 24 aves, 3 reptiles and 1 amphibian species. As outlined in the National Zoo Policy, in addition to displaying animals, conservation breeding of threatened species, zoos also function as rescue centres. As rescue centres, they act as interim or long-term facilities for care of animals rescued from the wild (e.g. individuals involved in conflict, abandoned/orphaned animals etc.). Additionally, there are 14 exclusive Rescue Centres in the country recognized by the CZA.

Zoos are also captive facilities most commonly considered for placement of animals seized/confiscated from illegal trade. By virtue of the already existing facilities and husbandry experience with housing, Zoos offer numerous benefits of placing seized/confiscated animals in a facility that provide life-time care under humane conditions.

Zoos often accept wide variety of animals which are often involved in domestic/international trade, many of which are also protected under CITES & WFLPA, 1972. These include for example elephants, lions, primates, tigers, parrots, birds of prey, flamingos, crocodiles, pythons, frogs, corals, manta rays and sharks. Zoos play an even more active role in supporting CITES in regulating trade in wildlife. In particular, the expertise of zoos and aquariums in conservation, animal welfare,



Dr. S.P Yadav
Additional Director General
(Project Tiger) and
Member Secretary (NTCA) &
Central Zoo Authority

education and outreach, which is of direct relevance to CITES, can be drawn upon more effectively in supporting the Convention locally and internationally.

While, on an international scale, CZA and its policies continue to align priorities more closely with CITES, locally Zoos can continue to monitor the live animal trade and assist in identifying species in trade in each region and the movement of species between regions.

Through education Zoos can help in raising awareness about the negative impacts of wildlife crimes including illegal trade and thus can help in demand reduction as far as illegal wildlife trade is concerned. Additionally, Zoos can also serve as training centres for frontline staff and personnel involved in tackling wildlife trade at regional levels.

Enforcement Operations



Odisha: 2.18 kg. of Pangolin scales were seized and two persons were arrested by joint team of WCCB and Odisha Police & Forest Dept. team from Bhubaneswar, on 05-10-2021.

Haryana: Joint team of WCCB and Haryana Forest Dept. seized 06 pieces of dried hemipenises of Monitor Lizards and arrested one wildlife trafficker from Jind, on 11-10-2021.

Tamil Nadu: WCCB and Madurai forest Dept. team seized 04 jungle Cats, 01 Eagle-Owl & one Eagle and arrested four persons at Madurai, on 12-10-2021.

Tamil Nadu: Dead Sea Cucumbers were seized from a boat & two person were arrested by joint team of WCCB and T.N Marine Police from Mandapam, on 19-10-2021.

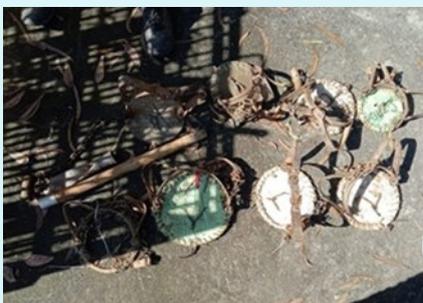
Tamil Nadu: 550 Kg. of Sea-Cucumbers packed in 31 Nylon Bags and an unmanned boat carrying the stuff, were seized by joint team of WCCB and Indian Coast Guards & Tamil Nadu Forest Dept. from North Seashore of Gulf of Mannar area, on 19-10-2021.

Haryana: On intelligence input of WCCB, leg-hold traps were seized and two poachers were arrested by Yamuna Nagar Wildlife Dept., Haryana, on 20-10-2021.

Tamil Nadu: Joint team of WCCB and Tamil Nadu Marine Police seized 300 Kg. of Sea Cucumbers packed in Nylon Bags and arrested a person near Seran Kottai Seashore at Rameswaram, on 20-10-2021.

Assam: On intelligence of WCCB, a live Pangolin was seized and 03 persons were arrested by a joint team of 6th BN SSB Raniguli and Runikhata Forest team, from Kokrajhar, on 21-10-2021.

Maharashtra: Joint team of WCCB and Thane Forest Division seized two Sand Boa Snakes and arrested three persons at Goregaon area of Mumbai, on 23-10-2021.



Enforcement Operations

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Assam: On intelligence input of WCCB, Bongaigaon Forest Department seized 19 Lesser Whistling Duck and 02 Grey Headed Swamphen from a farm house in Assam, on 28-10-2021.

Uttar Pradesh: WCCB conducted an operation with SOG, Kannauj Police & arrested three wildlife traffickers with two Sand Boa Snakes, from Kanauj, Uttar Pradesh, on 29-10-2021.

Madhya Pradesh: WCCB conducted a joint operation in association with STSF, MP Forest Dept. and arrested six persons with a leopard skin from Dhar and Alirajpur area of Madhya Pradesh, on 29-10-2021.

Assam: A joint operation of WCCB and Assam Forest Dept., led to seizure of one live Pangolin and arrest of two persons at Dhaligao area of Chirang, on 06-11-2021.

West Bengal: Joint team of WCCB and Jalpaiguri Forest Division seized one live Pangolin and arrested one person at Mayanguri, West Bengal, on 09-11-2021.

Uttar Pradesh: Joint team of WCCB and U.P Forest Dept. seized two Red Sand Boa Snakes and arrested a person from Moradabad, on 10-11-2021.

Haryana: Joint team of WCCB & Haryana Police seized 55 White Throated Munia, 49 Rose Ringed & 10 Alexandrine Parakeets and arrested a wildlife trafficker from Ambala, Haryana, on 11-11-2021.

Tamil Nadu: On intelligence inputs of WCCB, Tamil Nadu Forest Dept. seized 29 Rose Ringed Parakeets and arrested 03 persons, at Dindigul, on 14-11-2021.

Uttar Pradesh: 260 live Turtles, stuffed in two gunny bags, were seized and 03 persons were arrested by joint team of WCCB & U.P STF, at Lucknow, on 21-11-2021.

Gujarat: A joint raid, conducted by WCCB and Ahmedabad Forest Division, resulted in seizure of 7608 assorted paint brushes made of Mongoose bristles and arrest of a person from Ahmedabad, on 24-11-2021

Enforcement Operations



Tamil Nadu: Joint team of WCCB and Tamil Nadu Forest Department seized two Elephant ivory pieces (weighing 25 Kg.) and arrested 03 persons at Dharmapuri, on 25-11-2021.

Uttar Pradesh: 06 ivory pieces weighing 9.5 kg. (approx.) were seized and 03 wildlife traffickers were arrested by joint team of WCCB & Uttar Pradesh Forest Dept. at Deoria (U.P), on 02-12-2021.

Kerala: Joint team of WCCB & Kannur Forest Flying Squad seized two spotted Deer-horns and arrested four persons from Thalassery, Kannur, on 08-12-2021

West Bengal: A joint operation conducted by WCCB and Jalpaiguri Forest Division (W.B), led to seizure of a Pangolin-skin with scales and arrest of two persons from Malbazar, Jalpaiguri, on 11-12-2021.

West Bengal: 99 ISS Turtles (95 live & 04 dead) were seized and 04 persons were arrested by joint team of WCCB and West Bengal Forest Dept. from Panchpota Bazar area of North 24 Parganas Dist., on 11-12-2021.

Maharashtra: Joint team of WCCB and Maharashtra Forest Dept. seized 1735 pieces of paint brushes made of mongoose hairs from various paint shops at Karad, on 15-12-2021.

Madhya Pradesh: Joint team of WCCB & M.P Police seized a Leopard-skin and arrested two persons from Mandla District of Madhya Pradesh, on 24-12-2021.

Maharashtra: 188 pieces of Black Corals (framed) & 08 pieces of Hatha Jodi (Male reproductive organ of Monitor Lizard) were seized and 03 persons were arrested by joint team of WCCB & Pune Forest Division, from Pune, on 24-12-2021.

Tamil Nadu: 150 Kg. of Sea-Cucumbers, packed in 12 gunny bags, were seized and one person was arrested by joint team of WCCB and Tamil Nadu State Forest & Police Dept. from Mandapam, Ramnad, on 26-12-2021.

Uttar Pradesh: A joint operation of WCCB and U.P STF and Forest Dept. team, led to seizure of total 80 kg. of Turtle Calipee and arrest of two persons from Sultanpur (U.P), on 27-12-2021.



Enforcement Operations

Maharashtra



Several wildlife articles including Parakeets, Hathajodi, Sea Fan and Black Coral, were seized by joint team of WCCB and Maharashtra Forest Dept. from Jalgaon, on 12-11-2012.

Big seizure of wildlife contrabands

Maharashtra



Joint team of WCCB & Thane Forest Division seized huge catch of wild-birds including 43 Parakeets, 07 Owls, 02 Night Herons, 01 Sea Gull, 110 Kites, 02 Eagles and 08 Bats, kept on rooftop of a building at South Mumbai area, on 05-10-2021.

Release of WCCB Movies by Hon'ble Cabinet Minister of MoEF&CC

Nov, 2021: Hon'ble Cabinet Minister of MoEF&CC, Shri Bhupender Yadav inaugurated series of animation movies produced by WCCB, during the Valedictory Session of National Conference for Zoo Directors and Veterinarians, at Kevadia, Gujarat, on 11-11-2021.

These movies have been produced by Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) in association with United Nations Development Program (UNDP) India, to spread awareness against common myths leading to illegal wildlife trade and to sensitize the general public towards illegal wildlife trade related issues.

A glimpse:



Movie 1: 'Live in harmony with nature, stop illegal trade in wildlife'

This movie explains to the audience with a voice over, visuals and captions, on the theme Illegal trade in wildlife along with a scenario of wildlife crime and its link to illegal trade. It is in the form of a storyline, a father telling a story to his children, on a stormy rainy night. The movie explains as to how the illegal trade in wildlife has emerged as a form of organized crime. It explains the different laws which restricts and control the trade of wildlife products. It explains as to how and to whom to report if any suspicious activity is seen by the public.

Movie 2: 'Debunking Myths to Curb Illegal Trade in Wildlife'

This movie gives an overview of myths/ superstitious belief and occult practices associated with illegal wildlife trade.

Both of these movies have been made public and are available on the YouTube Channel of WCCB.

Visit @ <https://www.youtube.com/c/WildlifeCrimeControlBureau>



Celebrations/Events at WCCB

Celebration of Constitution Day 2021



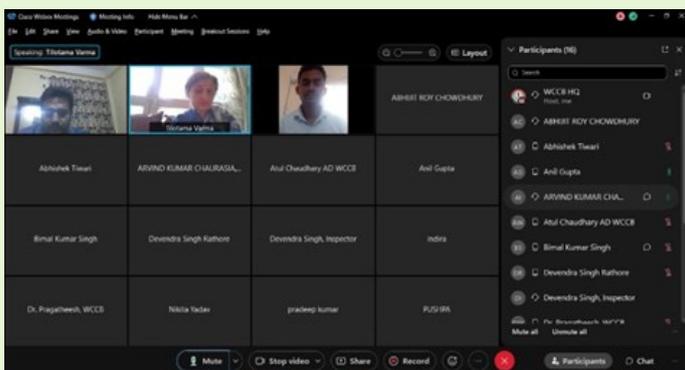
Marking the Constitution Day 2021 celebrations, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau organized a pledge taking ceremony at its Bureau Headquarter in New Delhi, on 26-11-2021. All officials and staff members of WCCB read the Preamble to the Constitution of India.

Vigilance Awareness Week 2021



Marking Vigilance Awareness Week, WCCB organized a 'Pledge Ceremony' at its Headquarter and all Regional Offices, on 26-10-2021. Officials and staff members took Integrity Pledge in the program.

National Unity Day/Rashtriya Ekta Diwas



All WCCB Officials came together to commemorate the National Unity Day and took Rashtriya Ekta Diwas pledge, administered by Additional Director, Ms. Tilotama Varma, on 31-10-2021, in a program held in virtual mode.

Field Programmes

WCCB Official took a session on "Wildlife crime & Wet markets in North-East India", in a program organized by University of Science & Technology, Meghalaya, on 01-10-2021.



WCCB organized a sensitization program for CISF & Airline personnel on 'Combatting illegal trade in wildlife' at Nagpur International Airport, on 04-10-2021.



RDD/NR, WCCB, took four sessions at NACIN, Delhi for the Customs & CGST Officials, during a two days' "WCCB MODULE" organized by NACIN, on 04-10-2021, attended by 70 officers.



WCCB organized a sensitization program for Chennai Airport officials, on 06-10-2021 attended by 40 personnel including officials of Airlines, Customs, Cargo & Parcel Services, Immigration Bureau and CISF.

30 officials of RPF & Railway Parcel Service attended a sensitization program organized by WCCB at Kochi Railway Junction, on 07-10-2021.



40 CISF personnel posted at Kochi International Airport, participated in a sensitization program organized by WCCB officials, on 10-10-2021.

40 CISF officials, posted at IGI Airport, Delhi, attended a sensitization program on 'Wildlife Contrabands in Trade' and a practical session on identification of wildlife articles organized by WCCB on 18-10-2021.



Officials of SSB, Customs, Police, Crime Branch, IB, PAC, GRP and Forest Dept. attended a one-day sensitization-cum-awareness program organized by WCCB, at Gorakhpur (U.P.), on 22-10-2021

Field Programmes



A session on “Species in Illegal Wildlife Trade & Modus Operandi” for the Customs Officials posted at Land Customs Station, Sonauli (Maharajganj), was organized by WCCB, on 26-10-2021.

WCCB conducted a session for Customs Officials on “Species in Illegal Wildlife Trade & Modus Operandi”, on 25-10-2021, attended by Customs Officials posted at LCS, Barhni, at Indo-Nepal Border.



40 CISF officials, posted at IGI Airport, Delhi, attended a sensitization program on ‘Wildlife Contrabands in Trade’ and practical session on identification of wildlife articles organized by WCCB on 26-10-2021.



40 officials of the Assam Forest Department participated in a 02-days capacity building training program organized by WCCB, at Nameri Tiger Reserve, Sonitpur, on 25 & 26 Oct, 2021.



WCCB organized a practical session on Identification of wildlife articles for SSB personnel at ITS, SSB, Kolkata, on 27-10-2021, attended by 19 SSB officials.



A training-cum-sensitization programme for GRP Officers, was conducted by WCCB and GRP Bhopal jointly, at Bhopal, M.P, on 30-10-2021.



WCCB Officials delivered lectures to trainee Range Forest Officers of Forest Rangers College, Rajpipla, Gujarat on a study tour program at Coastal & Marine Biodiversity Centre, Maharashtra, on 08-11-2021, .



Police Officials participated in a 2-day ‘Wildlife Crime Training Module’ organized by WCCB at Haryana Police Academy, on 17-18/11/2021. Total 94 Police Officials attended the training module.



Field Programmes



A training session of SFS Trainee Officers of CASFOS, Coimbatore, was organized by WCCB, at Tropical Forest Research Institute (TFRI), Jabalpur, on 25-11-2021, attended by 45 Officers.

WCCB organized a 02-day long Capacity Building Program for Forest & Police Dept. Officials, at Dindigul, Tamil Nadu, on 01 & 02, Dec, 2021. 57 Officials attended the program.



A 02-days Training Module for Wildlife & Forest Officials of Haryana, was jointly organized by WCCB and Haryana Institute of Public Administration (HIPA), on 06-07/12/2021, attended by 85 officials.



On 07-12-2021, WCCB organized a sensitization programme for CISF Officials posted at Hyderabad Airport on 'Wildlife Contrabands in Trade' and hands-on practical session on identification of wildlife contrabands.



72 personnel of Dudhwa Tiger Reserve attended a Training Program on "Search, seizure, investigation, filing of complaint & identification of WL articles", organized by WCCB & TRAFFIC India jointly, on 10-12-2021.



WCCB Official gave lecture to SSB Officials on 'Modus Operandi of Wildlife Crime in North Bengal' during a workshop organized by SSB Ranidanga, on 14-12-2021, attended by 46 personnel.



WCCB, UNDP India, Secure Himalayas Project & Sikkim Forest Dept. jointly organized a Workshop for Judicial Officers of Sikkim, attended by 20 Officials, on 15-12-2021.



A two-day Capacity Building Program for Sikkim Forest Officials was conducted by WCCB in association with UNDP India, Secure Himalaya Project, and Sikkim Forest Dept., on 16 & 17 Dec, 2021, at Gangtok.



Field Programmes



A sensitization-cum-training program for RPF Officials of West-Central Railway, was organized by WCCB, on 20-12-2021, at Jabalpur, attended by 31 Officers of Jabalpur, Bhopal and Kota Divisions.

48 SSB Officials attended a session on "Prevention of wildlife crime and wild animal in trade" addressed by WCCB Official, during a workshop organized by 64th BN SSB, on 30-12-2021.



A two-day Capacity Building Program for the Officials of Anamalai Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu, was organized by WCCB, on 27 & 28 Dec, 2021, attended by 37 participants.



35 CISF Officials, posted at Porbander Airport, Gujarat, participated in a wildlife sensitization program, organized by WCCB, on 30-12-2021.



Training Programmes in Collaboration with Other Agencies During the Quarter

Agency	Month	Course Name
NCRB	November, 2021	Cyber Crime and Digital Forensics– Investigation Track (CCDF-IT)
National Intelligence Agency	December, 2021	Intelligence Tradecraft
NCRB	December, 2021	Basics of CCTNS

Inter-Agency Coordination Meet



Dec, 2021: To discuss issues related to wildlife crime in Madhya Pradesh region, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) organized an inter-agency co-ordination meeting of Central and State Enforcement Agencies of the State, at Bhopal, on 02-12-2021.

Additional Director, Ms. Tilotama Varma addressed the meet which was attended by key officials of enforcement agencies viz. IB, CBI, CISF, AAI, RPF, WCCB, Railways, Forests, Police, STF, STSF, GRP, BMC, Postal & Electric Dept., and Tiger Reserves. The meet was held under the Chairmanship of PCCF (Wildlife) and CWLW, Madhya Pradesh, and attended by ADGP STF, MP Police, and

PCCM, West-Central Railway.

15th Inter Agency Coordination Meet of Enforcement Agencies was organized by WCCB on 08-12-2021, at Hyderabad, Telangana. The meet was chaired by PCCF & CWLW, Telangana and was addressed by Additional Director, WCCB. Issues related to wildlife crime situation in Telangana region were discussed in the meet. Senior Officials of various enforcement agencies & government departments of the State participated in the meet.



MAJOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

Arunachal Pradesh: Over 2,000 Personal Guns Surrendered Under 'Air Gun Surrender Abhiyan'

Nov, 2021: Residents of the Sikiputu and Raga areas in Arunachal Pradesh's Kamle district surrendered a total of 90 personal air guns on Thursday as part of the state's 'Air Gun Surrender Abhiyan' in an effort to conserve Arunachal Pradesh's wildlife. Arunachal Pradesh Forest Minister Mama Natung informed that over 2,000 guns have been surrendered since the start of the campaign. The state forest minister also urged neighboring states to join this wildlife conservation initiative.

He added that because of this initiative, hunting has decreased and the state's wildlife population is being conserved. He informed that the programme is playing an important role in raising public awareness of the value of the wildlife environment.

Takam Raja, a programme member, said that the programme is

incredibly inspiring because it aids in the balancing of the ecosystem. "It will be dangerous if only human beings will be left on this planet. Our ecosystem will collapse. So, it was necessary to take an initiative like this. It has been started by the state government," Raja said.

Union Minister of State for Forest, Environment, and Climate Change Ashwini Kumar Choubey launched the Air Gun Surrender campaign across the country in September, urging people not to shoot animals and birds. Retired forest workers, representatives from social organisations, and others were enlisted to help with the project.

Choubey had praised Arunachal's Forest and Environment Minister Mama Natung on the Air Gun Surrender Abhiyan, describing it as a great endeavour to prevent....

News Source: republicworld.com

CONGO SEIZES \$3.5 MLN OF IVORY, RHINO HORN AND PANGOLIN SCALES

Nov, 2021: Authorities in Democratic Republic of Congo have seized \$3.5 million worth of ivory, rhinoceros horn and pangolin scales in a joint operation with United States officials, the U.S. embassy in Kinshasa said on Monday. Two wildlife traffickers were also arrested in the United States on Nov. 4, following a more than two-year investigation between the two countries and global police agency Interpol. Congolese law enforcement recovered almost a ton of ivory and 34 kg of pangolin scales in several locations in the capital Kinshasa, the U.S. embassy said in a statement.

Congolese officials expect to seize upwards of 60 tons of ivory in further operations, said Olivier Mushiete, the head of Congo's Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN). "We are putting down an international network of traffickers that are mainly from Congo," Mushiete told Reuters by telephone. "We have already reached up to 20 tons in total. It's not over yet. There will be more operations in the coming days." Corruption, poor law enforcement and armed conflict have left West and Central Africa vulnerable to.....

News Source: reuters.com

OVER 200 POACHERS ARRESTED IN TANZANIA'S LARGEST NATIONAL PARK

Nov, 2021: At least 230 poachers and illegal fishermen were arrested in Tanzania's Ruaha National Park, the largest national park in the country covering 20,226 sq.kim, in 2020/2021, an official said. Jackson Laizer, a conservation officer for tourism and security unit of the Ruaha National Park, said most of the arrested suspects were engaged in poaching, illegal fishing and encroachment to the park, reports Xinhua news agency. Laizer said the poachers and illegal fishers were arrested during the period under review following beefed-up anti-poaching activities that were fully supported by the government. "Poaching of elephants has now been controlled but we are facing poaching for game meat and encroachment of livestock keepers who seek pasture for their cattle," said Laizer. Ruaha National Park offers excellent wildlife viewing, and is particularly good for spotting predators, including very large prides of lion and the endangered wild dog. Elephants and a big variety of antelope species are another big draw to the park. Tanzania has 22 national parks, including Serengeti National Park, a World.....

News Source: theweekendleader.com

HUNDREDS OF SPIDERS, BUGS SEIZED AS COLOMBIA INTERCEPTS ILLEGAL ANIMAL SHIPMENT

Dec, 2021: Hundreds of tarantulas, a scorpion, spider eggs and cockroaches have been seized at El Dorado Airport in Bogota, Colombia. The 309 specimens, including 232 tarantulas, were set to be illegally shipped to Germany before airport authorities intercepted the shipment. Colombia's Secretary of the Environment, Carolina Urrutia, said the creepy cargo was going to be transported by "two German

citizens". The Germans allegedly claimed they were taking the fauna to Germany for academic purposes.

Professionals from the Ministry of the Environment are now assessing the recovered animals ahead of releasing or relocating them. It was the second case in less than three months in which the authorities seized illegal animal material that was intended to be illegally

exported from Bogota. In September, 3493 shark fins and 117 kilograms of fish swim bladders were seized, which were packed in 10 boxes and which were to be sent in parcel mode to Hong Kong. So far in 2021, more than 11,000 animal specimens have been recovered, of which 7058 were living individuals, 159 dead and 3846 non-living specimens.....

News Source: 9news.com

HONG KONG BAN ON IVORY SALES COMES INTO FORCE

Dec, 2021: A ban on selling most ivory products in Hong Kong came into effect Friday, the culmination of a three-year process to eliminate the once rampant trade in the city. Hong Kong lawmakers in 2018 backed a bill opting for a gradual phasing out of the trade—a move some conservationists at the time criticised as a loophole that could be exploited.

The city has been accused of playing an oversized role in the industry, with one 2019 report by a local conservation group saying it accounted for around a fifth of all global ivory seizures in the last decade. On the eve of the ban, small queues of shoppers were spotted outside

some stores selling the product in the city's Sheung Wan district, according to local media reports. Friday's new rules ban the "import, re-export, and commercial possession of elephant ivory", but make an exception for antique pieces dating from before 1925.

Offenders could face a maximum fine of HK\$10 million (\$1.3 million) and 10 years' imprisonment. With its busy port and other transport links, Hong Kong had thrived as a major transit point for illegal trade in parts of endangered animals like elephants, rhinos and pangolins—most of it headed for consumers in mainland China. Hong Kong authorities in 2017 made their

biggest ivory bust in three decades, with the haul of 7.2 tonnes of tusks valued at around \$9 million. Authorities seized another 2.1 tonnes in 2019—after the phasing-out process had begun. African ivory was a sought-after status symbol in China and used to fetch as much as \$1,100 a kilogram (\$500 a pound). China's own ban on the ivory trade has been in force since 2018.

A spokesman for Hong Kong's Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department said the government was "committed to the protection of endangered species, including elephants".....

News Link: techilive.in

IN A FIRST, RARE PINK LEOPARD SIGHTED IN RAJASTHAN

Nov, 2021: In a first in India, the rare 'pink' leopard was recently sighted in Ranakpur region, in the Aravalli hills of south Rajasthan. Earlier sightings of the pink leopard were reported in South



Africa in 2012 and 2019, reports Claude Dsouza. Locals in Ranakpur and Kumbhalgarh claimed to have occasionally spotted the big cat — having a strawberry-coloured coat — in various regions because of the vast stretch of forest area the pink leopard has been venturing into, Rajsamand DCF Fateh Singh Rathore said. It was only recently that it was caught on camera.

Zoologists believe the strawberry leopard is a variant species of cats because of its body. Udaipur-based wildlife conservator and photographer Hitesh Motwani claimed to have captured photos of the leopard after a four-day search. He said it is aged around five to six.

News Source: timesofindia.in

14 NEW SUPER SNIFFERS JOIN INDIA'S WILDLIFE DOG FORCE

Nov, 2021: Fourteen young dogs and their 28 handlers joined India's wildlife dog force to combat wildlife crime and smuggling after completing a seven-month training programme. Wildlife sniffer dogs, popularly known as 'Super Sniffers', are part of the country's fight against wildlife crime. Illicit trade of wildlife is the fourth most substantial organised criminal activity globally, threatening the survival of many wildlife species.

In India, poaching for illegal wildlife trade is prevalent in some areas with the potential to have devastating impacts on targeted wildlife. The latest unit of wildlife sniffer dogs passed out of the Basic Training Centre Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (BTC-ITBP) camp in Panchkula, Haryana, and is the ninth batch to be trained since the launch of TRAFFIC and WWF India's wildlife sniffer dog training programme in 2008.

To date, 88 wildlife sniffer dog squads have been trained, according to a media statement from TRAFFIC, a wildlife trade monitoring network that operates as part of conservation organisation WWF India. The dogs were taught to detect tiger and leopard skin, elephant tusk, skin, and antlers of spotted deer and sambar at the training institute. The dog handlers also learned how to train

their dogs to identify other scents. "This programme was carefully designed to accommodate both basic obedience and detection skills specifically to combat the illegal wildlife trade," said the director of BTC-ITBP, Panchkula, in a media statement.

The training included conditioning techniques such as positive reinforcement through food and play. The dogs were exposed to various real-life search scenarios in both populated and forest areas.

During the seven months at BTC-ITBP camp, activities included searches of rugged terrain, checkposts, luggage, parking lots and vehicles. The trainers used small-sized wildlife articles to accustom the dogs to find targets with low scent concentration in these complex environments.

Dr Saket Badola, Head of TRAFFIC's India office, said, "The sniffer dogs trained under the programme are working relentlessly in tough terrains and have so far assisted the agencies in over 400 wildlife crime cases. The response from the forest departments to deploy and use Super Sniffers to control wildlife crime has been overwhelming." State forest departments, the.....

News Source: livemint.com

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Exit-Point Detection by WCCB



WCCB detected 10 Shahtoosh Shawls containing Tibetan Antelope Guard Hair which were attempted to be exported from Air Cargo Delhi destined for China, on 06-10-2021.



WCCB detected 20 Shahtoosh Shawls containing Tibetan Antelope Guard Hair attempted to be exported from Air Cargo Delhi destined for Germany, on 13-10-2021.



A cargo, suspected to contain Shark Fins destination to Hong Kong, was detected by Air India Officials at Chennai Domestic Terminal. WCCB assisted in examining & confirming the substance to be processed Shark Fins (32 kg.), on 18-10-2021.



WCCB detected 01 Shahtoosh Shawl containing Tibetan Antelope Guard Hair attempted to be exported from Air Cargo, Delhi destined for Kuwait, 15-11-2021.



WCCB detected 12 Kg. of Red Sanders declared as paper weight, made of teak-wood and destined to Hong Kong, at IGI Air Cargo, on 10-12-2021.



A parcel detained by FPO Customs, Delhi suspected to contain feathers of protected birds, was examined by WCCB and found to contain feathers (12 pieces) of Grey Jungle Fowl, on 14-12-2021. The parcel was destined for USA.

Exit-Point Detection by WCCB



A consignment declared as Cast Iron Pipes, examined by WCCB at ICD, TKD in Delhi, was found to contain Red Sander logs concealed in the consignment, destined for Dubai, on 16-12-2021.



A Customs referred sample was examined by WCCB and found to contain Jatamansi (*Nardostachys grandiflora*) 100 kg. and Lurking (*Picrorhiza kurtis*) 20 kg, both included in Appendix -II of CITES, on 20-12-2021.



WCCB detected 48 Shahtoosh Stoles containing Tibetan Antelope Guard Hair attempted to be exported from Air Cargo Complex, Delhi destined for Hong Kong, on 28-12-2021.

WCCB Official receives 'Special Jury Award' from CRCIDF



Dr. A. Pragatheesh presenting the Award to Additional Director, WCCB, Ms. Tilotama Varma, at WCCB Headquarter, in New Delhi

Dec, 2021: Wildlife Inspector of WCCB, Dr. A. Pragatheesh received "Special Jury Award" from Centre for Research on Cyber Intelligence and Digital Forensics, at the National Level Conclave 3.0 on 'Cyber Policing Best Practices Meet' organized by CRCIDF. He received this award for his excellent work on Curbing Illegal Shahtoosh Trade in India using OSINT on Social Media.



These awards are given to Law Enforcement Officers who have done admirable work in formulating the cyber policies, implementing the modernization standards, etc..

The National Conclave was organized in collaboration with Information Security Education Awareness-Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), Cyber Peace Foundation, International Justice Mission (IJM), to update department's knowledge on current trends and the reality of cybercrime, virtually.

Wildlife Week 2021 Celebration

A week-long celebration marking the “Wildlife Week 2021” was observed by Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB). The celebration which took place in the first week of October, 2021, saw an enthusiastic participation of all Regional Offices of WCCB. Several programmes, including Rallies, Competitions, Quizzes, Mass Awareness Drives, etc. were conducted across all Regional Offices of WCCB, during the period.

The most notable feature of the celebration was organization of a week-long National Webinar Series by WCCB, during which, four National Level Webinars were organized by WCCB in association with UNDP India, inviting key wildlife professional of the country to put forth their views regarding wildlife conservation. Held under the ‘SECURE Himalaya’ Project, the series was aimed at enhancing awareness on combating wildlife crime & illegal trade in wildlife in high-altitude Himalayas. Virtual discussions were organized on topics viz. ‘Strengthening CITES implementation in High Altitude Himalaya’, Tackling ‘Internet Based Illegal trade in Wildlife’, ‘Harnessing Technology Based Tools for Enhanced Enforcement’, ‘Transboundary Cooperation for Tackling Wildlife Crime in High Altitude Himalaya’. A pictorial view of programmes and activities undertaken during the period:



Online Sensitization/Training Programs

Celebrating Wildlife Week 2021, WCCB organized online Sensitization-cum-Awareness programs for the faculty & students of Mumbai Veterinary College, on 05th & 06th Oct, 2021, attended by 90 persons.

As a part of Wildlife Week 2021, WCCB Officials gave lectures to the Customs & CGST Officials on the second day of two days' "WCCB MODULE" organized by NACIN, Delhi, attended by 70 officers, on 05-10-2021.

Marking Wildlife Week 2021, WCCB, WORLD (NGO), NCC, Rajasthan Forest Dept. & Animal Welfare Board jointly organized a webinar on "Role of NCC Cadets in Animal Welfare, Healthy Coexistence & Combating Wildlife Crime", on 06-10-2021.

RDD/SR, WCCB lectured on "Conservation of Indian Wildlife & Role of WCCB" during a webinar organized by Thiagarajar College, Madurai, marking Wildlife Week 2021, on 07-10-2021, attended by 130 students.

Celebrating Wildlife Week 2021, WCCB organized a virtual Sensitization-cum-Awareness programmes for the students of ITI (Adivasi), Manikdoh & ITI Khed, Dist-Pune, on 07-10-2021, attended by 150 persons.

Additional Director, Ms Tilotama Varma, lectured on "Wildlife Crime Nature, Extent and Magnitude" during a two-day training workshop for IFS officers on 'Wildlife Forensics and Crime Control', organized by Assam Agriculture University, on 22-10-2021.

A 02-day virtual Training Module for Himachal Pradesh Police Officials, was jointly organized by WCCB and Himachal Pradesh Police Training College (PTC), Daroh, on 27/28-10-2021. 23 Police Officials attended the Training Module.

WCCB Official gave lecture on "Overview of illegal wildlife trade in India" to Range Forest Officers undergoing e-course on "Forest Legislations including Biodiversity Act and Forest Right Act" organized by Tamil Nadu Forest Academy, on 29-10-2021.

Additional Director, Ms. Tilotama Varma lectured on "An overview of wildlife crime", during an e-course on "Investigation of wildlife crime cases" organized by CDTI, Jaipur and WCCB, jointly on 08-11-2021, attended by Police Officers from across the states.

20 Customs Officials from Kerala attended a lecture on "Wildlife Protection Act 1972, CITES & Allied Acts & Wildlife Contrabands in Trade", given by WCCB Official in an online sensitization programme organized by NACIN Kochi, on 10-11-2021.

RDD(ER), WCCB lectured on "Reporting on Wildlife and Forest Issues: Dos & Don'ts" during a workshop on 'Sensitization on Environment Management issues' for media personnel organized by CASFOS, attended by 45 media persons from across the country, on 11-11-2021.

WCCB organized a virtual Sensitization Program for the officials of Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on "Convergence of Wildlife Trafficking with Drugs |Trafficking", on 12-11-2021.

Over 100 officials of Customs, DRI & SSB attended an online sessions on "Overview of Wildlife Trafficking, CITES & Wild Life (Prot.) Act, 1972" and "Wildlife Contrabands in Trade & their Identification" organized by WCCB for NACIN, Kanpur, on 23-11-2021.

WCCB organized sessions on "Role of Indian Customs in Combating Wildlife Trafficking" and "Interface Between Customs, WCCB & Other Enforcement Agencies" for the Officials of Customs, DRI & SSB, on 24-11-2021.

WCCB organized two sensitization sessions for BSF Officials of Kashmir Frontier on "Role of BSF in Countering the Menace of Transnational Wildlife Trafficking" and "Modus Operandi & Identification of Wildlife Contrabands", on 25-11-2021, attended by 44 BSF Officials.

WCCB conducted a virtual session on "Overview of Wildlife Crime, its Convergence with Other Serious Crimes & Role of WCCB" for M.Sc. (WL) students of Bharati Vidyapeeth University, Pune, on 26-11-2021, attended by 22 students.

WCCB Official gave lecture on "Cyber Wildlife Crime" in a webinar organized by Wildlife Trust of India, on 27-11-2021, attended by 50 participants.

RDD/NR, WCCB gave a lecture for State Forest, Police & STF Officials on "Overview of Cyber Wildlife Crime & Related Laws to Counter it" in a webinar organized by Wildlife Trust of India, on 28-11-2021. More than 40 officials from across the country attended the session.

Addl. Director, Ms. Tilotama Varma participated in the 08th EC Meeting of South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN), organized by SAWEN Secretariat, Nepal, on 29/30-11-2021, virtually.

WCCB conducted a 'Virtual Orientation Programme' for newly selected WCCB Volunteers and organized sessions on "Wildlife Contrabands in Trade" & "Cyber Wildlife Crime", on 04-12-2021.

Online Sensitization/Training Programs

Additional Director, Ms. Tilotama Varma lectured to Group 'A' CBIC Officers during an online training on "Prevention of Wildlife trafficking" organized by NACIN Faridabad, on 07-12-2021, attended by over 70 participants.

WCCB conducted a 02-day Capacity Building Training Programme for the Jharkhand Forest Dept. officials, on 16 & 17 Dec, 2021, virtually, attended by over 40 Forest Officials.

RDD (NR), WCCB, gave lecture on "Role of Law Enforcement in Detection & Prevention of Financial Crimes in Illicit WL Trade" in a Workshop on "Green Corruption: Financial Crimes in Illegal WL Trade" organized by Jindal Global University, on 18-12-2021.

63 Officials of Chhattisgarh Forest Dept. attended a capacity building training program, organized by WCCB, on 21 & 22, Dec, 2021.

RDD/ER, WCCB addressed Frontline forest personnel on "Wildlife Crime Management", during one-week 'Refreshers Course on Wildlife Management', organized by State Forest Training Institute (WB), on 24-12-2021

WCCB Official lectured on "Intelligence collection and prevention of wildlife crime" in a workshop organized by SSB Rangia, on 29-12-2021, attended by 42 officials.

35 CISF Officials, posted at Porbander Airport, Gujarat, participated in a wildlife sensitization program, organized by WCCB, on 30-12-2021.

Official Visits

ADG Wildlife visits WCCB Headquarter



ADG Wildlife, MoEF&CC & Ex-Officio Director, WCCB, Shri. Soumitra Dasgupta visited WCCB Headquarter, on 30-11-2021. Additional Director, Ms. Tilotama Varma welcomed the visiting Director and presented memento to him.

WCCB team visits Sayaji Baug Zoo in Vadodara, Gujarat



Senior WCCB Officials, led by Additional Director Ms. Tilotama Varma, visited Sayaji Baug Zoo in Vadodara, Gujarat and met the Zoo officials on issues of rescue & rehabilitation of wildlife animals, on 12-10-2021.

Mass Awareness Drives



Tribal students of Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (M.P) buffer area, participated in wildlife awareness rally, quiz contest, painting & essay competitions, organized by WCCB in partnership with M.P Forest Dept. to celebrate Wildlife Week 2021, on 04-10-2021.



WCCB and WWF (West Bengal)) jointly celebrated Wildlife Week 2021, at Bano-Bitan Central Park, Kolkata, on 06-10-2021.

50 people, including students, NGO Members, wildlife enthusiasts/ volunteers participated in street play, quiz session, panel discussions & signature campaign activities.



WCCB, in collaboration with Manas Tiger Reserve & Aaranyak NGO, organized an awareness program at Khamardwisha High School, Bhuyapara, on 07-10-2021.

120 students and 20 villagers took part in the program.



WCCB launched a mass awareness drive against illegal wildlife trade in partnership with West Central Railway, and placed several wildlife awareness posters at different strategic locations for display at Jabalpur Railway Station premises, on 29-10-2021.



These posters (in Hindi and English) have been prepared jointly by WCCB and UNDP India with an aim to spread awareness against illegal wildlife trade across the country.

PRI Programs by WCCB



Glimpse of programmes/activities organized for PRI members and villagers by WCCB

With U.P Forest Dept. and Turtle Survival Alliance, at Amethi, U.P, on 05 & 06 Oct, 2021

At Bakhira Pakshi Vihar, Santkabirnagar (U.P), on 06-10-2021.

At Munambam Harbour, Kochi, with Kerala Costal Police, on 12-10-2021.

For the Santhal Tribal Community members of Birbhum District in West Bengal, on 12-10-2021.

With Aaranyak NGO & Meghalaya Forest Dept. on 08-12-2021.

In collaboration with Aaranyak NGO and Meghalaya Forest Department, at Shillong & Nongpoh, Meghalaya, on 08 & 09 Dec, 2021.

With Costal Police of Kerala, at Kerala, on 15-12-2021.

At Mangar Bani (Sacred Grove), Aravalli Range, Faridabad, Haryana, on 19-12-2021.

In partnership with Aaranyak NGO & Raimona Forest Dept., at Raimona National Park, on 20-12-2021.

At Tinkoniya Reserve Forest area, Gorakhpur. on 24-12-2021.

At Uttari Kshetra Forest Range, on 25-12-2021.



Indian Pangolin

Scientific Name: *Manis crassicaudata*

Key Facts

The Indian Pangolin also called thick-tailed pangolin and scaly anteater is a pangolin native to the Indian subcontinent

Its distribution in Asia ranges from the eastern portions of the Punjab and Sindh regions of Pakistan, through almost all of India and Bangladesh, to northern Myanmar and the southern portion of the Yunnan province in China.

The total body length of fully grown Indian pangolins ranges from 45 to 147 cm. Their tails can be 33 to 45 cm long. Adult Indian pangolins weigh anywhere from 8 to 17 kg.

A unique feature of the species is their blonde striated scales, with 11 to 13 rows of scales covering their dorsal sides and their fore and hind limbs.

These scales are composed of keratin and make up 1/4 to 1/3 of the body mass of pangolins and are used as a defense mechanism against predators and harsh environmental conditions.

While they do not have any teeth, they do have a long tongue, which they use to capture prey. Their tongues extend an average of 25 cm from their mouths and measure 42.5 cm in total length – around 37% of the body length of an average adult.



Significance

Although normally shy, Indian pangolins are reported to wander into villages and have been known to dig through concrete & into houses. They are insectivores and help to keep ant and termite populations in check.

Pangolins eat termites, that may destroy infrastructure, and ants that could have negative impacts on agricultural crops. Also, since they use their powerful claws to dig up dirt to build their burrows, they break up and aerate soil.

Conservation in India

Indian pangolin is protected under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 as a Schedule I species.

It is listed as 'endangered' on the IUCN Red List.

It is listed in CITES: Appendix I

Threat

Even though Pangolins are protected under national & international laws for their conservation, their populations continue to drop because of continuing destruction of their habitats and illegal trade. It is considered the most trafficked mammals in the world due to high demand for their parts for its meat and scales. Its scale is used in Traditional Chinese Medicines. Their skins are traded illegally to be used in leather goods such as boots and jackets. Pangolin scales are believed to be aphrodisiacs, help treat headaches and colds. However, the scale is made of keratin, the same type of protein that makes up hair and finger nails – with no proven medicinal value.

Contact us:

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau
02nd Floor, Trikot- I
Bhikajicama Place, New Delhi- 110066
Ph: +91-11-26182484, Fax: +91-11-26160751
E-Mail: addl-dir-wccb@gov.in

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