IndiaWilds®

Newsletter

Wildlife Preservation & Problem Animals:

Development vs Conservation is a slogan which has often caused the death knell of many ecologically fragile lands because people immediately get convinced by the usage of the word develop as it connotes something good and better. Any infrastructure creation is seen as development, howsoever detrimental it might be to the place.

Wildlife preservation in India as well as the world over is facing a massive challenge arising from the population explosion of homo sapiens. The earth has an estimated human carrying capacity of 5 billion people. We are now at 7 billion and counting. India the second most populous country with 1.34 billion people is accelerating to take over China's population of 1.41 billion by 2024. This is certainly not an enviable competition to win.

With massive human population trying to increase their materialistic living standards it is increasingly becoming difficult for the wildlife to survive. Their habitat is fragmenting and shrinking due to linear projects like dams, canals, railway lines, roads, pipelines as well as industrial projects and urbanization. Their health is also negatively impacted by the pollution we cause from synthetic chemicals and toxic wastes dumped indiscriminately in forests, rivers and oceans.

The habitat of wildlife is also increasingly degraded due to invasive alien species, tree cutting, NTFP (Non-timber forest produce) collection, grazing of livestock etc. So when the hungry wild herbivores come out of the forest there is conflict. Mega herbivores like elephants can't be hemmed in within

Inside this issue:

Cover Page Photograph:

Tiger by Sabyasachi Patra

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Undigested polythene in the Elephant dung at Segur Road

small sanctuaries and national parks as they are designed to move around and cover large are-as for food. Increasing urbanization and projects cut off their traditional migratory corridors. Conflict is inevitable. They are then immediately branded as problem animals and are then killed. At times there are blatant violations of laws by even Government departments. A case in the point being Numaligarh Refinery erecting walls in the elephant corridor and despite orders the wall not being dismantled. Unfortunately the Government, perhaps misguided by some of its officers, often supports such illegalities and the wildlife bear the brunt.

There are many people who illegally enter the forests everyday. If there is an accidental encounter between a human and a wild animal then the person is likely to be killed. So immediately the tiger or leopard is branded as man-eater. In several cases officials under pressure from the villagers are ready to brand a tiger or leopard as maneater. Hunting is legally banned in India. However, there are some hunters who manage to circumvent this law by conniving with forest staff to kill animals that have been branded as maneaters or problem animals.

Some of the NGOs, researchers & conservationists are also quick to jump the gun and declare that any animal which is involved in conflict be quickly slaughtered. These people fear that if they don't support the move to declare an animal man-eater or problem animal then they would be in the bad books of the local forest department and local villagers. Fearing problems in their research they are all too obliging. The argument put forth is that the value of an individual animal is not greater than the species and sacrificing "problem animals" would get them the community support, which they say is better for conservation in the longterm.

Unfortunately, this is ethically not right. No one cares to find out the reason for the conflict. To be fair when an expert reaches the site of conflict it would have been days and marks would have been obliterated. So reaching conclusion can be difficult in some cases. The forest department officials are also in many cases too involved in managing the area and not able to devote time in the field to learn field craft.

There have been cases in the past where people have been murdered and thrown away in the forest. Wild pigs and other scavengers immediately scavenge and when the body is found the conclusion is drawn that the person was killed by a tiger. Tiger is a fastidious eater. It carefully eats from the carcass. However, people who don't understand tiger behaviour accuse the tiger of swallowing like a python. In one case in a premier tiger reserve people colluded to accuse a tiger of killing a person and said that an entire slipper of the person was found from the stomach of the tiger. Nothing can be farther from the truth. However, tigers are killed under some pretext or the other. There is no presumption of innocence as is applicable to humans. The dictum "*Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence*" is not applied to poor tigers and leopards.

So the tiger or leopard continues to earn negative points.

At times people have died trying to steal a fresh tiger kill when the tiger was a few feet away resting in the bush. Like any predator it attacks the person stealing its kill. Deaths of such people also adds up to the list of people killed by "maneater". No one realizes that the poor tiger was trying to protect its kill from a thief and what it did was simply natural.

There are also cases when people are defecating in the bush and a leopard mistakes the squatting person to be an animal and kills it. Upon realising that a person has been killed generally the carnivore leaves the body. Later by instinct when it comes back to the scene and finds the body lying, the tiger or leopard may consume a small portion of it. Or a wild pig or other scavenger many eat a portion of the flesh. Promptly the animal is declared as maneater and then captured and sent to a zoo or killed by one of the hunters.

In the past, people used to fear the tiger. Not many would enter into the forests fearing the wrath of the tiger. Today that fear is gone. People feel if someone is going to be killed then they will burn the forest. The forest department is often powerless. They are most often saddled with old employees who are not fit enough to patrol the forests. At times their salaries come after a few months. Underpaid, unfit and without motivation these forest staff can't save our wilderness areas. A few unscrupulous people among them even collect money from the woodcutters and poachers. In such situations anthropogenic pressures increase within the wildlife sanctuaries. Poaching becomes routine and is assumed as a birthright. So when the Government and forest department tries to relocate mega carnivores like tigers to such places, people protest, the most recent case of protest happened in Satkosia Tiger Reserve.

In some of the wildlife sanctuaries and tiger reserves the problem is more acute due to presence of large number of villages. When there are villages within the reserve it becomes difficult to monitor their actions. These days wide roads have been constructed within the forest and schools, hospitals etc are established. So there is no need for people to even leave the forest for a better lifestyle outside. Felling old hard growth trees and poaching can provide enough money. If one counts the number of SUVs possessed by villagers in number of prominent reserves, one would get an idea. And wherever there is money, politicians can't be left behind. So forest department is increasingly having a tough time to handle people in many places.

In some of the states the forest department and some of the experts seem hell bent on killing and removing wildlife so that

there is no man-animal conflict. That is the easy way. One reputed elephant biologist and NBWL member had ensured that a big group of elephants were removed from the wild in Karnataka and those poor elephants are now separated and sent to different elephant camps for a life in captivity for no fault of theirs. Their own fault was that they happen to be victims of circumstances where by human habitations expanded and their habitat shrunk. So they had to raid on crops. In India today that is a sure sign of being sentenced to death or a rigorous life imprisonment term.

Looking at the general apathy of the Government in preserving our wilderness and wildlife, most of India's wilderness areas are going to be devoid of wildlife. Our forests would soon be empty. And that would not be a good sign. There is a complex relationship between the various species in different habitats. Our modern science has been able to decipher only a limited number of interdependencies between species. While writing on Rainforests noted biologist George Schaller had said:

"*An intriguing aspect of rainforest life is its extraordinary mutualism, a dependence of organism upon each other. For instance, each of the many fig species has its own wasp pollinators…. A rainforest is remarkably complex, yet its stability is tenuous. The extinction of a pollinator or seed disperser may cause the death of a plant species and with it many other species, especially invertebrates, which depend on it. Such responses are subtle and perhaps long delayed. How many key species can a rainforest lose before order becomes chaos, before the community collapses in an avalanche of extinctions?"* His words are equally applicable for other types of forest ecosystems.

So what is the way forward?

The Political class after Indira Gandhi have more or less failed to protect India's wilderness and wildlife. They are far more focused on narrow interests of few people. Only if people realise that everything is connected and our wellbeing is also dependent on forests, environment and wildlife issues then there would be some pressure on the politicians. Politicians only understand vote bank issues. If they feel that they are going to be outvoted in the next elections then they would listen to people. People have to realise that due to climate change massive natural calamities like storms, rainfalls etc are going to be common place and the wanton destruction of forests for human habitations, dams and other projects is going to exacerbate the effects of these natural calamities. Only then they will apply sustained pressure on the politicians. Unfortunately that day may be too late to reverse the environmental devastations that is going on.

Conservation News -

Relief for Chilika lake as SeaPlane Project called off

The Government has listened to our #SaveChilika campaign where conservationists, researchers, experts and people from all walks of life stood up to oppose the muddleheaded project. Click on the link to watch a 3 min video :

https://youtu.be/w9Llz89Ve7I

The Government of Odisha had asked and received a detailed note on the proposed Seaplane project from the Chilika Development Authority. Accordingly the Government had said no to the project. Based on the Government of Odisha's response the Airports authority of India has scrapped the plan to allow a SeaPlane project in the ecologically fragile Ramsar site of Chilika lake.

This is one of the rare cases where an ecologically fragile place could be saved from ill thought-out projects. All our conservationists and naturalists friends should bear it in mind that for every victory that we gain, there are perhaps a thousand losses. Every moment an ecologically fragile landscape in some corner of India is moving one step further towards irreversible damage.

No Victory is Permanent

No defeat is temporary.

Each one of us should continue spreading awareness about the perilous state of wilderness and wildlife of our country so that more people can understand what we are losing and its impact on all of us.

Conservation News -

Specialised training on ecotourism on the anvil for capacity enhancement of local communities:

Emphasising the Government's commitment to implement people-centric initiatives, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, has said that the Ministry has prepared an Eco-tourism policy that will provide livelihood opportunities for the local communities, as well as educate visitors and enhance their understanding of nature.   In a statement on the policy for Eco-tourism in forest and wildlife areas, Dr. Vardhan said that in an effort to enhance the capacity of local communities, specialised training on eco-tourism activities will be imparted. The Minister pointed out that the members of local communities can be employed as nature and tourist guides for providing hospitality, as nature science interpreters and patrol partners to protect nature. He added that the policy seeks to encourage homestead-based hospitality enterprises for enhancing local livelihood, which includes small-scale entrepreneurs and operators like souvenir shops and equipment for hiring for photography.

Eco-tourism can be defined as 'responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people. Forests and wildlife are elements of nature and are an inseparable part of the environment. The interface between nature and human beings is intricate, thus nature conservation must entail participation of people as a non-negotiable component. The policy envisages active participation of forest dwellers living away from the forests, as well as of fringe dwellers in the forest.   The eco-tourism policy has been formulated in consultation with various important stakeholders.

Highlighting the objectives of the Eco-Tourism policy, Dr. Harsh Vardhan stated that engaging local communities and develop mechanism with a view to enrich local economy, as well as sustainable use of indigenous material is a primary one. "*Establishing partnerships with all stakeholders to develop and promote nature tourism and promoting biodiversity richness and heritage values of India's wilderness and adopting low impact nature tourism to ensure ecological integrity are some of the other objectives of the policy*", he said.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan also indicated that the policy will further help in enhancing the education and awareness about wildlife and habitat in the country. He added that the Eco-Tourism policy will also help in improving the livelihood of people living in and around Protected Areas (PAs).

Stating that areas with good wildlife habitat will be developed for eco-tourism to reduce pressure on sensitive "core" areas and to enhance local benefits, the Minister stressed the importance of community participation in such initiatives with a view to reinforce their interface and sense of ownership. Dr. Vardhan expressed the view that infrastructure development for eco-tourism will be designed in such a manner that it merges with the ambient environment. He pointed out that the activities undertaken will be eco-friendly in nature and no permanent structure will be allowed without clearance under Forest (Conservation) Act. The Minister averred that the infrastructure developed will be limited to the carrying capacity of the area. Pointing out that the demarcation of eco-tourism zone will be based on target-species, their behavioural and habitat characteristics, Dr. Vardhan said that the eco-tourism plan will identify locations and routes for visitors, as well as the

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activities permitted and permissible time and means of travel for the visit.

The Minister observed that eco-tourism will be developed in wildlife conservation areas designated as Protected Areas (PAs) and will include wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, conservation reserves and community reserves, as well as in areas outside designated Protected Areas, including forests, mangroves, sacred groves, mud flats, wetlands and rivers. He also asserted that each State/Union Territory will have to establish an Eco-Tourism Development Board to advise the State/UT on the modalities of eco-tourism and to oversee the implementation of the policy. *In cases of dispute, the decision of the management of Protected Areas will prevail*", Dr. Vardhan said.

This announcement by Dr. Harsh Vardhan is welcome as we have been raising our voice for ecotourism for a long time. However, the way the carrying capacity of National Parks is decided and huge number of vehicles and visitors are asked to move into the forest in a line without stopping is making mockery of the word ecotourism. In many premier tiger reserves, the feeling one gets is that of a zoo. The forest department is more focused on earning revenue from the tourists and less on foot patrolling and preserving the wilderness areas. Our previous note on eco tourism can be found here: ***https://www.indiawilds.com/diary/indiawilds-newsletter-vol-2-issue-iv/***

Draft of India Cooling Action Plan released:

A draft of "India Cooling Action Plant" has been released in Delhi on 17th of September. India is the first country in world to develop such a document (ICAP), which addresses cooling requirement across sectors and lists out actions which can help reduce the cooling demand. This will supposedly help in reducing both direct and indirect emissions. The thrust of the ICAP is to look for synergies in actions for securing both environmental and socio-economic benefits. The overarching goal of ICAP is to provide sustainable cooling and thermal comfort for all while securing environmental and socio-economic benefits for the society.

The goals emerging from the suggested interventions stated in ICAP are: (i) Recognition of "cooling and related areas" as a thrust area of research under national science and technology programme to support development of technological solutions and encourage innovation challenges, (ii) Reduction of cooling demand across sectors by 20% to 25 % by year 2037-38, (iii) Reduction of refrigerant demand by 25% to 30% by year 2037-38, (iv) Reduction of cooling energy requirements by 25% to 40% by year 2037-38, and (v) Training and certification of 100,000 servicing sector technicians by the year 2022-23, in synergy with Skill India Mission.

The broad objectives of the India Cooling Action Plan include - (i) Assessment of cooling requirements across sectors in next 20 years and the associated refrigerant demand and energy use, (ii) Map the technologies available to cater the cooling requirement including passive interventions, refrigerant-based technologies and alternative technologies such as not-in-kind technologies, (iii) Suggest interventions in each sector to provide for sustainable cooling and thermal comfort for all,

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(iv) Focus on skilling of RAC service technicians, and (v) Develop an R&D innovation ecosystem for indigenous development of alternative technologies.

ICAP has been prepared by the MoEF&CC after deliberations with multi-stakeholders in public domain for receiving comments/suggestions.   Recognizing that integrated actions, taking a holistic view on the cooling requirement across sectors with long term perspective (20 years) will have a higher impact than either of the actions taken in isolation, the Ministry had initiated the process for developing the Cooling Action Plan in July 2017.   Also another publication called, "A Guide for integration of topics related to HCFC Phase out and Energy efficiency in Architectural Curriculum" was also released.

Centrally Sponsored Umbrella Scheme of Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats to continue beyond 12th Plan

The Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved continuation of the Centrally Sponsored Umbrella Scheme of Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (CSS-IDWH) beyond the 12thPlan period from 2017-18 to 2019-20. The Scheme consists of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger (CSS-PT), Development of Wildlife Habitats (CSS-DWH) and Project Elephant (CSS-PE). The total outlay is Rs. 1731.72 crore as central share (Rs. 1143 crore for Project Tiger, Rs. 496.50 crore for Development of Wildlife Habitats and Rs.92.22 crore for Project Elephant) from 2017-18 to 2019-20.

A total of 18 tiger range States, distributed in five landscapes of the country would be benefitted under the Project Tiger scheme. Similarly, for other two schemes, the coverage is entire country in case of Development of Wildlife Habitats (DWH) and 23 elephant range States for Project Elephant. It would foster wildlife conservation in general with specific inputs for tiger in Project Tiger area and elephant in Project Elephant area.

Besides environmental benefits and effective implementation of tiger conservation inputs in and around tiger reserves under Project Tiger, wildlife conservation inputs in Protected Areas & nearby areas under Development of Wildlife Habitats and Elephant conservation inputs in Project Elephant areas, the schemes should result in overall strengthening/ consolidation of tiger, elephant and wildlife conservation in the country.

The schemes would address the human wildlife conflict effectively. Besides, the communities opting for voluntary relocation from the Core/Critical Tiger Habitat (6900 families) would be benefitted under Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger (CSS-PT) and 800 families under Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Development of Wildlife Habitat.

The implementation of the schemes would be done through the respective States in designated Tiger Reserves, Protected Areas and Elephant Reserves.

Unfortunately, these schemes are failing in many places due to lack of funds, lack of adequate manpower and often due to

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lack of scientific research inputs. We wish that the present Government can increase the funding to the various schemes and expedite relocation of villages from within the forests so that an inviolate zone can be created for wildlife.

India's National REDD+ Strategy released:

Complying with the UNFCCC decisions on REDD+, India has prepared its National REDD+ Strategy. The Strategy builds upon existing national circumstances which have been updated in line with India's National Action Plan on Climate Change, Green India Mission and India's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to UNFCCC.

In simple terms, REDD+ means "Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation", conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. REDD+ aims to achieve climate change mitigation by incentivizing forest conservation.   The strategy seeks to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and also developing a roadmap for enhancement of forest carbon stocks and achieving sustainable management of forests through REDD+ actions. The National REDD+ Strategy will soon be communicated to the UNFCCC.

Paris agreement on climate change also recognizes role of forests in climate change mitigation and calls upon country Parties to take action to implement and support REDD+.   India has communicated in its Nationally Determined Contribution under Paris Agreement, that it will capture 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of Carbon dioxide through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.   India's first biennial update report to UNFCCC has revealed that forests in India capture about 12% of India's total GHG emissions. Thus, forestry sector in India is making a positive cost effective contribution for climate change mitigation.

The REDD+ strategy will help the country to fulfill its NDC commitments and will also contribute to the livelihood of the forest dependent population. A National Governing Council of REDD+ chaired by the Union Environment Minister at the national level and two technical committees, headed by DG, Forest Survey of India and DG, ICFRE are being established for supporting the REDD+ implementation in the country. The REDD+ actions at the State level will be coordinated by the committee headed by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) & Head of Forest Force (HOFF) of the States.

Equipment Discussions -

GoPro launches Hero7 Black Action Camera:

Struggling action camera maker GoPro which launched the action camera genre has now announced the HERO7 Black action camera. The Hero7 Black captures Ultra HD 4K (3840x2160) resolution video at up to 60 fps. And it has packed a built-in HyperSmooth Video Stabilization in the Hero7 Black to ensure that the video is smooth and looks professional unlike shaky videos from action cameras.

HyperSmooth is a built-in feature which gives gimbal-like stabilization. It predicts the shooters movements and compensates for camera shake. This is a significant feature which ensures that you can even walk and talk or hike up a mountain and use the footage. No need for a gimbal. So there is weight and cost saving while retaining the compact form factor.

The Hero7 Black can also record at 2.7K resolution at up to 120 fps for slow motion. For 1080p finish this would be very useful. Also one can shoot at Full HD 1080p at up to 240 fps for super slow motion.

The Hero7 Black can click still images at a maximum 12MP resolution in bursts of up to 30 images per second.

Like its pervious Hero6 Black, the Hero7 Black camera is waterproof upto 33 feet deep. If you need to dive deeper than there are optional diving housings available. It has a touchscreen at the back for review or changing settings etc.

The Hero7 Black comes with all the features present in previous cameras.

Protune: So one can use Protune mode to shoot in a near flat mode for professional editing applications. One can ofcourse

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manually adjust all parameters like colour, ISO, sharpness etc.

LiveStream: One important feature is the ability to directly live stream from the GoPro Hero7 Black. However, there is no feature to connect multiple Hero7 Black cameras to do multi-camera live webcast. The videos will be simultaneously saved to the SD card while livestreaming.

HDR for the masses: The GoPro Hero7 Black intelligently applies HDR to the photos and does tone mapping, noise reduction etc so that the shots can be improved.

Face Detection: Face detection is enabled in the GoPro Hero7 Black camera. So the camera can automatically recognize gestures. The camera can also record by using voice commands.

Wide modes: The Hero7 Black has an equivalent focal length of 24.4mm. The Standar or Wide mode is equivalent to 16.5mm and the Standard SuperView is 15.1mm.

It comes with USB 3.0 Type-C input and Micro HDMI output.

Other Features:

- Raw still photos

- Photos and videos auto transferred to the GoPro app in mobile so posting to social media is easier.

- Timer mode for clicking selfies

- HEVC (High Efficiency Video Compression) recording format to reduce file size

- Advanced noise suppression to filter wind, handling noise etc and make the sound clear

- Time-lapse video

- Time-lapse photo (0.5 - 60 second intervals)

- 3-mic processing advanced wind noise reduction

- Wake on Voice

- Advanced metadata

- Supports optional 200' GoPro dive housing

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- Karma compatible

- Stereo audio capture

- Raw audio capture in .wav format

- 5mm audio mic input via optional GoPro 3.5mm mic adapter

- HDMI video output

- Video/photo exposure control

- Auto low light

- Continuous photo capture

- Looping

- Night photo

- Night-lapse photo

- Status display screen on the front

- Optional Supercharger power adapter can recharge batteries fast.

- For athletes, riders, skiers etc the GPS feature can track speed, distance, height etc and can come handy.

- Vertical videos i.e. portrait mode is available

Price:

$399 US dollars. It is now on preorder and is expected to be available soon.

Preorder:

*https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/buy/GoPro_HERO7_Black/Ntt/GoPro%2BHERO7%2BBlack/N/0/kw/
search/BI/19990/KBID/13252/DFF/d10-v1-t12*

<u>Equipment Discussions -</u>

Canon launches flagship XF705 UHD camcorder with 15x Optical zoom:

Canon Launches New Flagship XF705 Professional Camcorder Featuring 4K Video Recording at 60P/4:2:2/10-Bit

Salient Features:

Resolution: UHD 4k (3840x2160) at 60p/4:2:2 colour

Bits: 10 bits

Media: SD Cards

Processor: Dual Digic DV 6

Lens: L series, 15x Optical zoom (25.5 mm - 382.5mm)

Autofocus: Dual Pixel AF

Image Stabilisation: 5 Axis IS

ND: 3 stage ND filter

Video format: XF-HEVC, XF-AVC, XF-MPEG

Log mode: Canon Log 3

HDR: 2 modes, Hybrid Log-Gamma (HLG) and Perceptual Quantization (PQ)

Recording: Simultaneously record HDR to internal SD cards and SDR to external recorder

Interface: 12G-SDI

I wish it had the 18x optical zoom range of XF305 series which is equivalent to 29-527mm. Without it this camera wont be a good choice for wildlife due to the limited focal length range.

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Price: $6999 US Dollars

PRESS Release below:

Canon Launches New Flagship XF705 Professional Camcorder Featuring 4K Video Recording at 60P/4:2:2/10-Bit

Professional Camcorder Produces HDR Video to On-Board SD Cards

MELVILLE, N.Y., September 12, 2018 – Canon U.S.A. Inc., a leader in digital imaging solutions, today announced the new flagship model for the Company's XF-series professional camcorders, the XF705. The camcorder features 4K (3840 x 2160) video shooting enabling users to record high-image quality at 60p/4:2:2/10-bit/HDR[1] video to on-board SD cards. Ideal for broadcast and video production applications in addition to capturing video content at events and concerts, the 4K camcorder meets the needs of users who require high-quality video capture and more efficient video production workflows.

"The ability to capture high-quality video on-the-go in a compact and lightweight form factor is extremely valuable to videographers of all skill levels," said Kazuto Ogawa, president and chief operating officer, Canon U.S.A., Inc. "This camcorder was designed to help professionals take their productions to the next level with 4K video recording and a wide-range of advanced features."

The XF705 features an L-Series 15x optical zoom lens (35 mm film equivalent: 25.5 mm–382.5 mm), 1.0-inch CMOS sensor and a Dual DIGIC DV 6 image-processor providing greater image quality and performance. In addition, users can easily choose between two HDR formats—Hybrid Log-Gamma (HLG), ideal for such scenarios as broadcasting and live video transmission and Perceptual Quantization (PQ), which is well-suited during web transmission and film production. The camcorder features Canon's newly developed XF-HEVC video format that enables users to record HDR video to SD cards while delivering a high compression ratio. It also allows HDR (internal SD card) and SDR (external recorder) simultaneous recording. Delivering smaller file sizes allows for more efficient workflows across various stages of the production process, from shooting to editing.

When shooting 4K video, focusing precision is vital, the XF705, featuring Canon's revolutionary Dual Pixel CMOS AF[2] enables users to maintain smooth autofocus operation through enhanced touch-panel operations. The XF705 meets a wide range of professional demands, with Canon Log 3, 12G-SDI, Built-in Wi-Fi, 4-channel audio, 3 density ND filter and 5 axis image stabilization for its 15x optical zoom lens. It is also compatible with the current leading non-linear editing software, as well as Canon XF Utility, a software that supports the new XF-HEVC video format, as well as XF-AVC and XF-MPEG, and is used for import, playing back and managing video data as well as cropping still-image data.

Price and Availability

The Canon XF705 professional camcorder is scheduled to be available in December 2018 with a suggested retail price of **$6,999.00***. Additional CA-CP200 L power adapters are available for purchase as well with a suggested retail price of **$285.00***

Equipment Discussions -

Canon announces IS Ver 3.0 of 400 2.8 and 600 f4 lenses:

Canon has announced the Image Stabilised Ver. 3.0 of its Super telephoto lenses by developing EF 400 f2.8 L IS III USM and 600mm f4 L IS III USM lenses. These lenses are way lighter than the pervious versions. I have the 400 f2.8 L IS USM lens which is the first image stabilised version of the 400 f2.8 lens. It weighs 5.6 kgs. The version 400 f2.8 L IS III weighs 2.84 Kgs. The 600mm f4 L IS III USM lens also has got its weight reduced. These lenses will be available in December 2018. The price of the 400 f2.8 L IS III USM is 11999 US Dollars. And the 600 mm f2.8 L IS III USM lens is priced at 12999 US Dollars. Given that rupee has depreciated so much, it would not be easy for anyone except the very serious professional to be able to afford it.

Canon Redesigns Premium L-Series Super-Telephoto Lenses With Its New EF 400MM F/2.8L IS III USM AND EF 600MM F/4L IS III USM Lenses

New Compact and Lightweight EF Super-Telephoto Lenses Are Well Suited for a Variety of Photographers' Needs

MELVILLE, N.Y., September 5, 2018 – Most professional photographers need to carry multiple lenses in their camera bags. Helping to lighten their load, Canon U.S.A. Inc., a leader in digital imaging solutions, introduces two new super-telephoto lenses, the EF 400mm f/2.8L IS III USM and EF 600mm f/4L IS III USM. Both lenses possess a dramatic weight reduction and high-image quality, making it ideal for shooters to easily transport and capture images during action-driven scenarios, such as sports and wildlife. Both lenses now hold the title of world's lightest in their respective focal length*. The

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weight of the EF 400mm f/2.8L IS III USM and EF 600mm f/4L IS III USM lenses has been reduced by 2.2 lbs. (more than 25 percent) and 1.9 lbs. (more than 20 percent) respectively.

"When developing updates to some of Canon's most popular legacy lenses, one common question that is asked by photographers was 'can they be lighter,'" said Kazuto Ogawa, president and chief operating officer, Canon U.S.A., Inc. *"The significant reduction of weight in these two lenses addresses this customer need and delivers thoughtfully designed, high-quality optics ."*

The new lenses are must-haves for advanced and professional photographers shooting wildlife, aviation, sports and news with Canon's new EOS R full-frame mirrorless camera (with use of one of the three new Canon mount adapters), as well the EOS 1D and 5D series of DSLR Cameras. Both lenses feature two of Canon's most advanced propriety lens technologies - Air Sphere Coating (ASC) and Super Spectra Coating (SSC), helping to reduce flaring and ghosting, and suppressing the reflection of light, leading to vivid images.

These updated lenses inherit the excellent overall build-quality and ruggedness photographers have come to expect and admire from the Canon EF L series of lenses. In addition, the minimum focusing distance has been improved for both lenses, from 2.7m to 2.5m (8.8ft to 8.2ft) for the EF 400mm f/2.8L IS III USM and 4.5m to 4.2m (14.8ft to 13.8ft) for the EF 600mm f/4L IS III USM.

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Additional noteworthy features of the lenses include:

- Upgraded Optical Image Stabilization from three-and-a-half stops to five shutter speed stops[1] of correction over the previous f/2.8 lens

- Improved, flexible focus control with a customizable electronic-focus ring

- Two fluorite lenses and one super UD lens, helping to provide high image quality

- Circular nine-blade aperture

- 17 lens elements in 13 groups

- Heat-shielding paint helps prevent lens temperature from rising during excessive exposure to sun

- Fluorine coating on front and rear optical elements, helps to reduce smears and fingerprints

- Inner focusing system with Ring Ultrasonic Motor

Equipment Discussions -

Canon Announces EOS R 30.3 MP Full frame Mirrorless Camera:

Canon has announced the EOS R full frame mirrorless camera with 30.3 MP still photo resolution and 4K video.

The highlights of the EOS R are several. Key among them being the 30.3 Megapixel CMOS sensor that captures gorgeous images, a Dual Pixel CMOS AF system for fast and accurate autofocus, impressive 4K video recording capabilities. All this comes in a compact and intuitive design that's compatible with RF, EF* and EF-S* lenses, opening a world of creative possibilities. Ready to capture any number of subjects in many different environments, the EOS R is primed to deliver the stunning photos and videos that photographers, moviemakers and any visual storytellers need to make their stories fly.

The EOS R camera features a 35mm full-frame CMOS sensor with approx. 30.3 effective megapixels for stunning results with incredible detail and clarity, even in low-light situations. It's powered by the DIGIC 8 Image Processor, which enables an expansive ISO range, enhances Image Stabilization and turbo-charges operations across the board for outstanding image quality and impressive performance.

The EOS R camera has a standard ISO sensitivity range of 100–40000 for stills and 100–25600 for video (100–12800 for 4K video shooting). Combined with the EOS R camera's remarkable low-light AF performance, still and video shooting is possible even in dark situations in a variety of places and occasions.

The EOS R camera's AF system features an incredible 5,655 manually selectable AF points**. Combined with a focus area that covers approx. 88% horizontal and 100% vertical*** when using RF lenses and select EF lenses, this AF system helps ensure swift and accurate focus no matter where your subject is located in the frame.

INCREDIBLE LOW-LIGHT AUTOFOCUS

EV -6^ Low-light Autofocus

Amazing for nighttime photography or in very low light, the EOS R camera's brilliant AF can operate in light as dim as a light rating of EV -6^ where other AF systems may fail or search. Phenomenal AF is achieved even when using lenses with high F numbers. This ultra-sensitive AF works in concert with the EOS R's EVF to clearly capture subjects even when there's limited light.

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SHARP FOCUS WITHIN 0.05 SEC.^^

0.05 sec.^^ High-speed Focusing

The EOS R camera's highly responsive Dual Pixel CMOS AF system delivers the world's fastest AF focusing speed of 0.05 seconds^^. This means fast action can be captured and focus can be maintained with speed, accuracy and ease.

Touch and Drag AF

Touch and Drag AF makes it fast and easy to select a focus point without taking your eye away from the viewfinder. Using the Touchscreen LCD, it's as simple as pointing to the desired area of focus. The chosen AF point is then displayed in the camera's EVF for quick confirmation.

Variety of AF Modes

The EOS R camera features an expanded range of selectable AF modes to adapt to specific situations and subjects. For example, with Eye Detection AF, when the EOS R detects a human face, it automatically uses the subject's eye as the autofocus point and maintains focus as the subject moves through the image frame.

f/8 and f/11 Compatible in All AF Areas

With the EOS R camera, autofocus will operate over nearly the entire image area even when used with compatible f/8 and f/11 lenses. This means the EOS R can easily achieve sharp AF using lenses with smaller apertures, and is even compatible with select EF extenders for uncompromised shooting at an expanded range of focal lengths. For wildlife photographers this is a huge benefit.

4K 30p, Full HD 60p, HD 120p

The EOS R camera offers advanced recording features such as 4K at 29.97 fps, Full HD at 59.94 fps and HD at 119.9 fps. Helpful func

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tions include distortion correction during recording and Movie Digital IS. Additionally, video can be recorded during still photo shooting by simply pressing the Movie Shooting button. 4K @ 25p is available.

4K IPB/ALL-I MP4 H.264

The EOS R camera can record 4K video using IPB or ALL-I compression and save them as MP4 files. This helps provide further flexibility with both file size, image quality and integration with video clips recorded with other cameras.

Canon Log

Built-in Canon Log gamma reduces heavy shadows and blown out highlights, delivering movie images with approximately 12 stops of dynamic range (at ISO 400) for excellent shadow and highlight detail. Ideal for post-production and multi-camera set-ups, Canon Log is an indispensable feature that makes the EOS R camera a serious moviemaking performer.

HDMI Output for 4K 10-bit 4:2:2 Video

The EOS R camera features an HDMI port that's useful for outputting recorded video directly to an external drive. For maximum color and dynamic range when shooting with Canon Log, the EOS R can even output 10-bit movie recordings in ITU-R BT.2020 color.

Focus Peaking and Dual Pixel Focus Guide

For help when using manual focus, Focus Peaking helps establish the focus area quickly and clearly by indicating the area in focus with a colored line. It's usable with the Dual Pixel Focus Guide feature, which displays where the position of focus is relative to the subject and is especially helpful when recording movies.

BUILT-IN OLED ELECTRONIC VIEWFINDER

The EOS R camera features a high-precision 0.5-inch OLED (Organic Light-Emitting Diode) EVF with approx. 3.69 million dots and a 23mm eyepoint. Displaying a bright image and extensive shooting information that rotates with the camera, the viewfinder excels in bright conditions where viewing the camera's LCD may prove difficult.

Excellent Visibility

The EOS R camera's electronic viewfinder has been created to provide a bright, sharp and colorful 100% view of the subject at hand. Equipped with an aspherical lens, the EVF shows a crisp and vivid image with minimal aberration or distortion, even when the eye moves off the center of the visual field.

High Eyepoint

The EOS R camera's EVF has a bright, 23mm-high eyepoint design that creates a generous 30mm space between your nose and the

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rear of the viewfinder. This makes it easy to compose and view images in the viewfinder with or without glasses. A dioptric adjustment of -4 – +2 means it's simple to change as needed to suit various users.

3.69 Million Dots

The EVF's 0.5-inch OLED based display features approximately 3.69 million dots for an incredibly sharp and detailed image that makes it easy to check focus and view the extensive image data that's displayed.

3.15" VARI-ANGLE TOUCHSCREEN LCD

The EOS R camera has a flexible 3.15-inch Vari-angle LCD that makes it easy to compose and shoot from virtually any angle. Its touchscreen enables setting changes and more with just a tap.

INNOVATIVE CONTROL

Multi-function Bar with Customizable Functions

The EOS R camera's newly designed multi-function bar provides a high level of functionality and customization options for fast, intuitive shooting. Positioned to sit right under the thumb, the touch bar allows the user to change settings, check manual focus, browse finished photos and more.

## REAL-TIME INFORMATION

Dot-matrix LCD Panel

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An LCD panel on the top of the EOS R camera features a dot-matrix display that gives real-time information on the camera's status, recording mode and more. It can be inverted from black to white to suit viewing preferences or the ambient light source.

READY FOR REAL-WORLD OPERATION

Magnesium Alloy Body

Comfortable and solid in the hand, the EOS R camera features a rigid yet lightweight magnesium alloy chassis that enhances body durability while shielding the camera from electromagnetic radiation and heat. It also has a tempered front panel for internal rigidity.
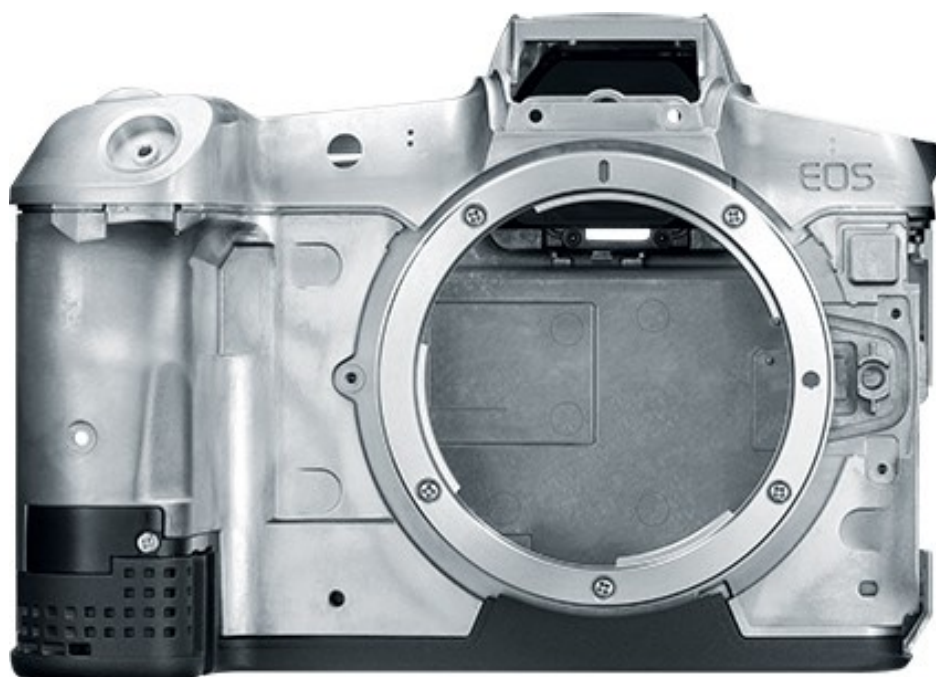
Shutter Durability

The EOS R camera has a robust, electronically controlled focal-plane shutter that's rated to approx. 200,000 cycles for consistent and reliable use. It shoots as fast as 1/8000 sec. at up to 8 fps, and up to 5 fps with Servo AF.

Shutter Closes if Powered Off without Lens

The EOS R camera has a mechanism to close the shutter when the camera is powered down and adjust settings accordingly to protect the shutter curtain.
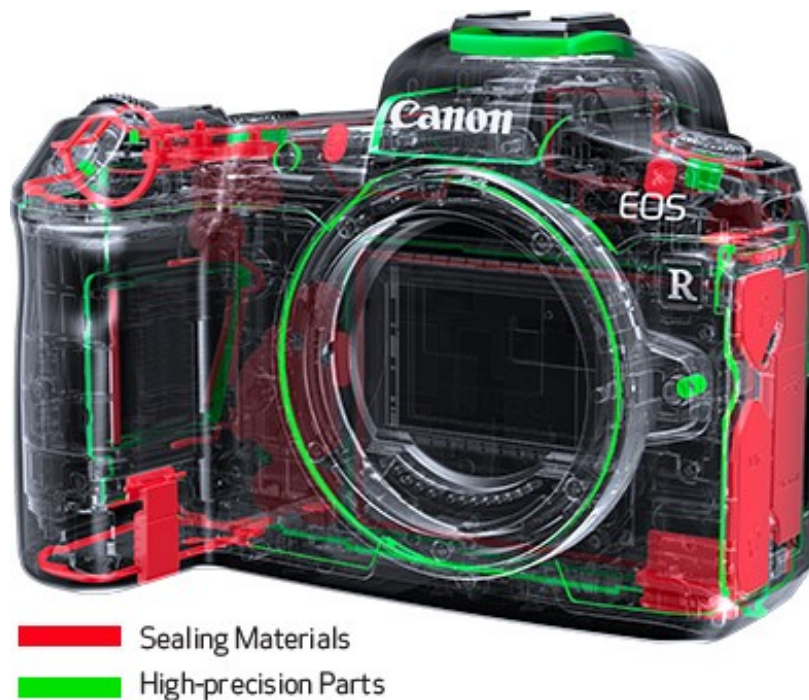

Dust and Water-resistant

The EOS R camera is designed for use in a variety of weather condi

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tions. Sealing materials are used in critical areas, while its precise design and construction help to minimize accidental penetration of dust and moisture in the rest of the camera body.

Sealing Materials
High-precision Parts

B&H Link: <u>*https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/1433710-REG/canon_eos_r_mirrorless_digital.html/ BI/19990/KBID/13252*</u>

PRESS RELEASE

Canon once again revolutionises the future of photography and filmmaking with pioneering, new EOS R System

London, UK, 5 September 2018 – Canon Europe, world leader in imaging solutions, has today redefined the frontiers of photography and filmmaking with the launch of the pioneering EOS R System. Over thirty years on from the original, era-defining EOS launch, the bold, new EOS R System will once again expand photographic possibilities in countless ways. The new RF lens mount has been engineered with the perfect blend of optical, mechanical and electronic design to capture unique moments in previously impossible ways.

A pioneering lens mount, built from the best of EOS legacy

Since its inception in 1987, the EOS System – including Cinema EOS – has grown into the most recognised imaging system in the world. Today's introduction takes the EOS platform to new heights, incorporating the best from the existing system, with even greater levels of performance, lens design possibilities and creative flexibility. The new RF mount has been built on the strengths of the existing EF mount and is the result of detailed research by Canon engineers, who have designed an impressive optical system with a flange back distance of 20mm and a wide 54mm diameter lens mount - allowing for even greater freedom when designing lenses. The new

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mount's 12-pin connection enables enhanced communication and power transmission between the lens and camera body, further enhancing lens design options, resulting in higher image quality and enhanced usability.

Mr Yuichi Ishizuka, President and CEO, Canon Europe, Middle East & Africa, commented: "When we launched the EOS System 30 years ago, we sent a clear message that the future of photography was here. Now, as one of the most iconic imaging systems in the world, our commitment remains. Canon will continue to invest in the unrivalled EOS world with cameras, lenses and accessories that set new heights in image quality, optical excellence and performance, all while satisfying the ever-evolving needs and demands of its customers."

Exceptional quality in every detail

Built from the ground up, the new System has been reengineered with invaluable input during the System's development from professional and enthusiast photographers and filmmakers. The EOS R System with RF mount and Dual Pixel CMOS AF delivers unrivalled optical excellence, the world's fastest autofocusi and faster communication between camera and lens. Features that are synonymous with EOS – fast performance, superb ergonomics and superior, uncompromising, image quality – remain at the heart of the EOS R System.2

Featuring innovative technology for photography and filmmaking alike, the EOS R System allows all users to shoot and film in extremely low light with accurate focusing, thanks to Dual Pixel CMOS AF. Small and discreet, the EOS R System gives flexibility, plus the advantage of silent shooting. It also offers the highest

standard of movie output from any Canon EOS System camera, outside of the Cinema EOS range, enabling filmmakers to take their storytelling to the next level in 4K with output in 10-bit over HDMI. The whole system has refined handling and enhanced ergonomics, including an electronic viewfinder and extensive customisation, allowing the user to the focus on the subject rather than the camera.

A system designed with lenses at its core

The EOS R System inherits all the existing system advantages, importantly full compatibility with existing EF and EF-S lenses and accessoriesii, when using one of three newly-developed lens adapters, expanding the boundaries of image capture. Canon has today also launched four new lenses, compatible with the EOS R System – the RF 28-70mm f/2L USM, RF 50mm f/1.2L USM, RF 24-105mm f/4L IS USM and RF 35mm f/1.8 MACRO IS STM. Building on Canon's lens heritage, these high-performance lenses will push forward the frontiers of creative capture thanks to the new cutting-edge optics and advanced image processing for both stills and video. Additionally, users of existing Canon EOS full frame or APS-C DSLR cameras can enjoy the EOS R System with their existing EF and EF-S lenses thanks to the adapters, while retaining the same performance as when used on a DSLR, as well as access to EOS accessories and Speedlite flashes.

Adding to the full frame family

Adding to the EOS full frame line-up, Canon has today unveiled the first camera body to carry the EOS R name and RF lens mount -

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setting the new standard for the camera of tomorrow. With the world's fastest autofocusiii, it is also the world's first camera with the ability to focus in light conditions as low as -6EViv and

totally silent shooting, providing stunning quality results every time. The EOS R redefines photo and video performance with unrivalled image quality, state-of-the art connectivity, refined ergonomics and responsive handling.

Further expanding the existing EOS System, Canon today also launches the EF-M 32mm f/1.4 STM – a new 32mm lens for the EOS M mirrorless system – and the EF 400mm f/2.8L IS III USM and EF 600mm f/4L IS III USM, two revolutionary, lightweight professional super telephoto lenses for the EF System.

Pricing and Availability

The EOS R is available to pre-order from 12th September 2018 and available to purchase from 9th October 2018 with the following RSPs:

- EOS R body and mount adapter - £2,349.99/ €2,729.99

- EOS R body, mount adapter and RF 24-105mm f/4L IS USM lens - £3,269.99/ €3,819.99

- RF 50mm f/1.2L USM lens - £2,349.99/ €2,729.99

- RF 24-105mm f/4L IS USM lens - £1,119.99/ €1,319.99

- Mount adapter EF-EOS R - £99.99/ €119.99

- Control mount ring adapter EF-EOS R - £199.99/ €239.99

Available to purchase from December 2018 with the following RSPs:

- RF 28-70mm f/2L USM lens - £3,049.99/ €3,549.99

- RF 35mm f/1.8 MACRO IS STM lens - £519.99/ €599.99

Natural History -

COUNTRY NOTEBOOK: Muckna at Bokani : M.Krishnan - 8 July 1968
The Sunday Statesman (shared by Shri. Saktipada Panigrahi)

MUCKNA [at BOKANI, Kaziranga]

" THE INDIAN ELEPHANT, in spite of name, has a wide distribution outside India, in neighbouring countries such as Ceylon, Burma and Siam. Incidentally it is quite distinct from the African Elephant, and not merely a different species as most people seem to think,the Indian and African Elephants belong to different genera altogether, there is only one species of the genus ** Elephas, E maximus **, which is the Indian Elephant, there are two species of genus Loxodonta, the African Elephant, of which only one is larger than ours.

Usually when an elephant is distributed over several countries, territorial races of it are distinguishable. The Tiger has a few such races, the Manchurian and the Indian, for instance -- within India, the white tigers of Rewa are a distinct kind, if not a race, but I am afraid there is no such animal as the Royal Bengal Tiger. Though ** Elephas maximus** has such a wide distribution in SE Asia, it is impossible to distinguish territorial races of it.

No less an authority than GP Sanderson says that seeing two tamed elephants, one Wild caught in Burma and the other in South India, no one can say which came from where without prior knowledge. For a somewhat different reason, I too think this true. Although I have no personal acquaintance with elephants from Burma, as Sandarson had, I have seen elephants from foot-hills of the Himalayas to the farthest South, and though I have noticed pronounced differences between individuals in their tusks, bodily shape and relative proportions (particularly in large herds) these differences have no territorial basis.

However, certain tendencies are more pronounced or more usual, in some areas than in others, Ceyonese elephants, for example are tusk less. Tusk less Bulls or Mucknas are found all over India and everywhere generally endowed with much thicker trunks than the tuskers and often more powerfully built. But Assam has the greatest number of mucknas of any region, and Kerala probably the least -- the commonness of mucknas in Assam is reflected in their elephant control rules which make it compulsory for a licensee shooting a tusker to shoot a muckna as well.

In South India, Kurwar, and elsewhere I had seen several mucknas, but none that was outstandingly big. So when a kind friend went miles out of his way to inform me that a singularly impressive muckna was visiting the shallow water at Bokam. I set off at once for this remote interior area of the Kaziranga sanctuary.

When I arrived there in the afternoon, after a long ride on elephant back, he was there, on the other side of the bheel. there was no cover and the wind was not favourable but I made my way slowly on foot to the edge of the water for a better look at him. Seldom I have seen as superbly proportioned a bull elephant and I have seen some.

His trunk seemed almost as massive as his thick-muscled limbs and was generously flecked with pink -- the tip being entirely pink -- there were pink flecks on the face and ears too. The tail was so long that the brush at the tip almost touched the ground, and his build was not only massive and powerful but also beautifully balanced. He was in musth, and his cheeks stained black. He did not mind me silting on the water's edge across the bheel but the people behind me moved into view and he made of.

Makhana in musth   **Image Courtesy - Suraj Sreedhar**

An hour later he was at the long stretch of water directly in front of our camp. Luckily, this water was thickly fringed with tall grass and I could approach unseen. However, when I got near enough the light was dead wrong against me, and I got only a rim-lit silhouette.

By moving 60 feet to one side and getting into the grass and partly into the water a good picture could be taken, but four grass stems were in the way I asked the willing young man who had accompanied me and was now lurking behind to remove them, gesturing with my hands to indicate a sawing with the knife and saying 'cut' I should not have spoken but only gestured. He hacked at the stems and hearing him the great beast moved off.

He didn't go far. He stood behind a tree facing me, and I stayed put on the slippery wet bank, half hidden by grass, I was confident he could not see me unless I moved and perhaps he too felt he could not be seen, standing behind a thick hole that did not hide his great bulk. For fully half an hour he stood there watching, as immobile as an elephant can be. Then, with aloud sigh he turned and disappeared into the forest and we did not see him again.

Subsequently, by two careful measurements of the impress of this forefeet in the clay, making due allowance for the slight spread I found his height at the shoulder was 9 feet 2 inches I have seen taller elephants and a superbly-built tusker just an inch or so under 10 feet in height -- but this muckna impressed me tremendously."

M. Krishnan

This was published on 8 July 1968.

Wildlife Photography -

Elephant digging by Sabyasachi Patra

Barking Deer by Jitendra Katre

Wildlife Photography -
Leopard by Shyamala Kumar
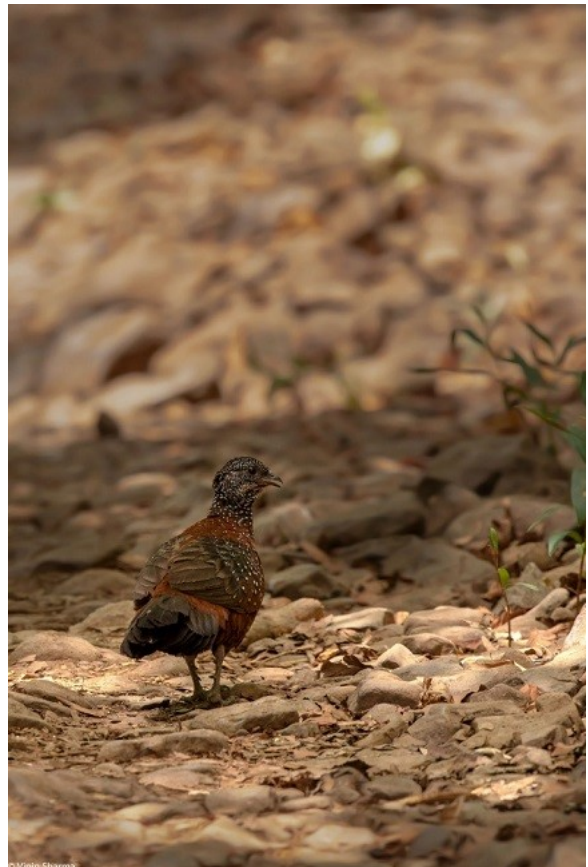

Golden-Langur by Samrat Sarkar

Wildlife Photography -

Ruddy Shelduck by Sabyasachi Patra

Painted-spurfowl by Vipin Sharma

Wildlife Photography -

Caterpillar by Anil Kumar Verma

Lynx spider with a beetle catch by Prajwal Ullal

Wildlife Photography -

Broadhead Planarians (Genus Bipalium) by Mrudul Godbole

Mangroves choking in Versova (Mumbai) by Paramvir Singh

This is the **118th Issue of IndiaWilds**.

The photo of a tiger adorns the cover page of this issue. This beautiful and majestic animal is increasingly threatened by loss of habitat and poaching. And to add to the challenge due to the increased anthropogenic pressures in tiger forests, these charismatic apex predator is increasingly being branded as man-eater and problem animal and officially killed by Hunters. The tigers have a majestic roar. However, its voice is rarely understood and hence for humans animal species like this tiger is voiceless. We wish the readers of this magazine can be the voice of these voiceless animals.

I look forward to your inputs and support in preserving the last tracts of wilderness and wildlife of our beautiful country. For other interesting articles and images check - *http://www.indiawilds.com/forums/*

To post in the IndiaWilds forums, you can register free of cost using your Full Name as user id at -

http://www.indiawilds.com/forums/register.php

If you are already a member of IndiaWilds and have forgotten you user id and/or password you can mail administrator@indiawilds.com

 Regards,
Sabyasachi Patra

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Publisher's address: -   **Plot No. 1, Akarpuri Colony,**
                                      Near Vaithal Temple, Old Town,
                                      Bhbuaneshwar, 751002
                                      Odisha
                                      Mobile - +919910900446