

India's bird population suffers long-term decline

Joint study by 10 bodies blames growing threat from loss of habitat, widespread presence of toxins, hunting and trapping

G. ANANTHAKRISHNAN
CHENNAI

Over a fifth of India's bird diversity, ranging from the Short-toed Snake Eagle to the Sirkeer Malkoha, has suffered strong long-term declines over a 25-year period, while more recent annual trends point to a drastic 80% loss among several common birds, a new scientific report jointly released by 10 organisations said on Monday.

The State of India's Birds 2020 (SoIB) assessment raises the alarm that several spectacular birds, many of them endemic to the sub-continent, face a growing threat from loss of habitat due to human activity, widespread presence of toxins, including pesticides; hunting and trapping for the pet trade. Diminishing population sizes of many birds because of one factor brings them closer to extinction because of the accelerated effects of others, the report warned. For every bird species that was found to be increasing in numbers over the long term, 11 have suffered losses, some catastrophically.

Rare urban sparrows
Of 101 species categorised as being of High Conservation Concern – 59 based on range and abundance and the rest included from high-risk birds on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List – endemics such as the Rufous-fronted Prinia, Nilgiri Thrush, Nilgiri Pipit and Indian vulture were confirmed as suffering current decline, and all except 13 had a restricted or highly restricted range, indicating greater vulnerability to man-made threats.

Among widely known species, the common sparrow, long seen as declining in urban spaces, has a stable population overall, although the data from major cities such as Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai confirm the view that they have become rare in cities and urban areas. Among the possible reasons for this is a decrease in insect populations as well as nesting places, but there is no conclusive evidence in the scientific literature on radiation from mobile phone towers playing a part.

The SoIB was produced using a base of 867 species, and analysed with the help of data uploaded by bird-watchers to the online platform, eBird. Adequate data on how birds fared over a period of over 25 years (long-term trend) are available only for 261 species. Current annual trends are calculated over a five-year period.

Looking at the health of avifauna based on scientific groupings such as raptors (birds of prey), habitat, diet, migratory status and endemism (exclusively found in an area), the analysis concludes that raptors overall are in decline, with 'open country' species such as the Pallid and Montagu Harriers, White-bellied Sea Eagle and Red-necked Falcon suffering the most.

The severe long-term decline of vultures, recorded and analysed for years now, is underscored by the report. Migratory shorebirds, along with gulls and terns, seem to have declined the most among waterbirds, the report states, consistent with population trends among Arctic-breeding shorebirds based on independent assessments.

Habitats need help
Forward-looking actions suggested by the report include an update to the Red List of endangered species published by IUCN using the SoIB, collaborative research by scientists and citizens and urgent emphasis on habitats of species of high concern, notably grasslands, scrublands, wetlands and the Western Ghats.

Suhel Quader, a member of the SoIB team, noted that the report was a first step and an assessment of trends rather than causes. "Habitat loss and fragmentation are known causes of species declines, but targeted research is needed to pinpoint causes of decline", he said.

BIRD WATCHING DATA POINT



Facing threats: Nilgiri Pipit, a species of High Conservation Concern is currently suffering a decline. • FILE PHOTO

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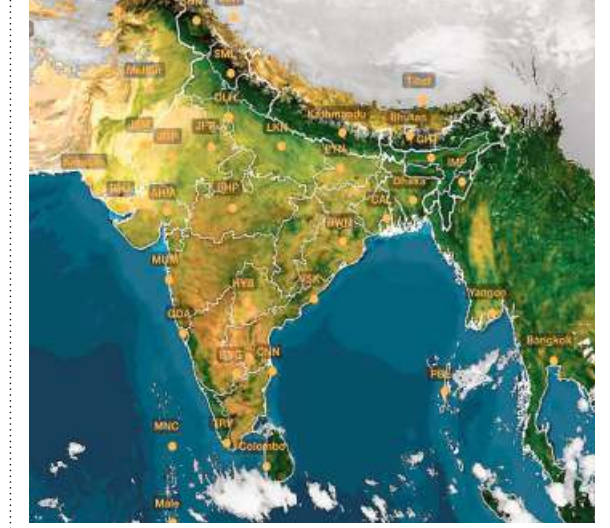
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BIRD WATCHING DATA POINT

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely over isolated parts over Arunachal Pradesh.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	28.4	16.5	Kozhikode	.....	35.4	24.4
Ahmedabad	34.0	19.1	Kurnool	.....	35.5	19.7
Aizawl	20.3	.....	Lucknow	.....	27.7	12.2
Alahabad	28.1	10.2	Madurai	.....	35.6	20.6
Bengaluru	32.6	17.2	Mangaluru	.....	35.7	24.0
Bhopal	29.4	10.8	Mumbai	.....	38.1	19.8
Bhubaneswar	31.8	19.8	Mysuru	.....	32.4	18.3
Chandigarh	25.5	19.2	New Delhi	.....	26.7	12.0
Chennai	32.0	20.6	Patna	.....	26.6	12.0
Coimbatore	34.2	19.9	Port Blair	.....	29.4	21.1
Dehradun	25.8	10.0	Puduchery	.....	32.0	20.6
Gangtok	13.7	8.4	Pune	.....	34.1	18.3
Goa	36.5	22.2	Raipur	.....	31.0	15.2
Guwahati	28.4	14.4	Ranchi	.....	27.6	10.1
Hubballi	33.0	19.0	Shillong	.....	17.0	7.9
Hyderabad	33.6	17.5	Shimla	.....	17.2	5.2
Imphal	25.3	8.9	Srinagar	.....	16.8	1.2
Jaipur	31.0	12.4	Thiruvananthapuram	.....	34.9	24.2
Kolkoata	33.6	25.0	Tiruchirappalli	.....	35.0	19.8
Kohima	15.6	7.4	Vijayawada	.....	33.2	20.6
Kolkata	29.8	16.9	Visakhapatnam	.....	29.9	22.6

IN BRIEF



Fire breaks out at GST Bhavan in Mazgaon

MUMBAI
Several important documents were damaged in a massive fire that broke out at GST Bhavan in Mazgaon on Monday morning. No casualty was reported.

Six killed as car falls into gorge in Uttarkashi

DEHRADUN
Six persons were killed and one child is missing when the car they were travelling fell into a gorge in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand on Monday, police said. The car, with seven passengers on board, fell into the gorge in Nalupani area. PTI

Former Chief Secretary held in ₹640 crore scam

AGARTALA
Former Tripura Chief Secretary Y.P. Singh — a key accused in the ₹640 crore PWD scam of 2008 — was on Monday arrested from Ghaziabad in Delhi NCR. He was the Principal Secretary of the PWD when the graft allegedly occurred.

14 officials booked for death of Dalit

STAFF REPORTER BHOPAL

The Shivpuri police have registered a case against 14 forest officials for allegedly shooting dead a Dalit man, while his family filled water from a hand pump near a forest post, in the district on Sunday.

The Forest Department claims that when a patrolling team reached a forest post at Fatehpur village to remove an encroachment by the victim, villagers pelted stones on them, prompting the firing of pellets.

The victim's family alleges the officials fired at them during a scuffle that broke out over drawing water from a hand pump in the village.

"An FIR (First Information Report) has been registered against ten identified persons and others who are unnamed," said R.S. Chandel, Shivpuri Superintendent of Police.

"The victim suffered more than 50 pellet wounds," he said.

Peninsular command by next year end, says General Rawat

DINAKAR PERI NEW DELHI

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat on Monday spelled out a road map for restructuring the Armed Forces that would holistically counter threats along the borders with China and Pakistan as well as in the Indian Ocean, backed by logistical agreements with other countries.

General Rawat said that an Indian Ocean-centered Peninsular Command, possibly formed by merging the Eastern and Western Naval Commands, should start shaping up by the end of next year.

"Security of peninsular India should be the responsibility of one Commander. Can we integrate the Eastern and Western Naval Commands and call it Peninsular Command? We will be issuing study directives for the Peninsular Command by March 31," Gen. Rawat said in an interaction with media-persons here on Monday.

The study will look at ear-



General Bipin Rawat

marking some assets of the Army and the IAF for deployment under the Peninsular Command.

Gen. Rawat pointed out that the Chief of Naval Staff must look at the "big picture", and stressed that the "Indian Ocean region is one entity".

Military diplomacy

He added that military diplomacy also must be prioritised — an observation that coincided with the departure of the Naval Chief, Admiral Karambir Singh, to Myanmar on Monday.

Gen. Rawat said India has signed several logistics agreements with a number of countries, which should be leveraged for operational turnaround. "We will work with other Navies to see how we can work with them...for logistical support," he observed.

Google to end 'Station' programme

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Five years after it started the 'Station' programme to bring free public Wi-Fi to 400 busiest railway stations in India, Google has decided to gradually wind down the service globally as it believes that better data plans and improving mobile connectivity have made it "simpler and cheaper" for users to get online.

However, users in India will be able to continue using the existing facilities at the over 400 stations via RailTel, Google's partner in India for the programme.

The technology giant said that through the year 2020, it would be working with its partners to transition existing sites so that they could remain useful resources for the community.

The programme was kick-started in India in 2015 as a partnership between Google, Indian Railways and RailTel to bring fast and free public Wi-Fi.

NEWS

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BIRD WATCHING DATA POINT

Govt. plans research on 'indigenous' cows



Under study: Scientific research will be carried out on milk products derived from Indian indigenous cows. • FILE PHOTO

JACOB KOSHY NEW DELHI

The government has unveiled a programme to research on 'indigenous' cows. To be funded by multiple scientific ministries, the initiative, SUTRA PIC, is led by the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

It has the Department of Biotechnology, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Ministry for AYUSH (Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy) among others and the Indian Council of Medical Research as partners.

Five themes

SUTRA PIC or Scientific Utilisation Through Research Augmentation-Prime Products from Indigenous Cows, has five themes: Uniqueness of Indigenous Cows, Prime-products from Indigenous Cows for Medicine and Health, Prime-products from Indigenous Cows for Agricultural Applications, Prime-products from Indigenous Cows for Food

and Nutrition, Prime-products from indigenous cows-based utility items, according to a concept note on the DST website.

Researchers from academic organisations as well as "capable voluntary organisations (NGOs) active in India with proven record of accomplishment in executing S&T-based R&D projects," were invited to apply for funding.

Milk derivatives

"The proposals under this theme should aim to perform scientific research on complete characterisation of milk and milk products derived from Indian indigenous cows; scientific research on nutritional and therapeutic properties of curd and ghee prepared from indigenous breeds of cows by traditional methods; development of standards for traditionally processed dairy products of Indian-origin cow," says the 22-page note explaining the objectives of the programme.

Southern Bench of SC not favoured: Prasad

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, in a letter to Rajya Sabha member and Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam chief Vaiko, said that though the matter of setting up a Southern Bench of the Supreme Court of India is pending in the top court, the issue has so far not found favour.

The letter, dated February 12, responded to a query raised by Mr. Vaiko in Parliament, in which he asked if a Bench of the Supreme Court can be set up in south India. "According to Article 130 of the Constitution, the Supreme Court shall sit in Delhi or in any other place or places as the Chief Justice of India may, with the approval of the President of India, from time to time, appoint. Representations have been received at various times from various quarters for the establishment of Benches of the Supreme Court in various parts of the country," Mr. Prasad said in his reply.

"I would like to state that the idea of a separate Bench of the Supreme Court outside Delhi has not found favour with the Supreme Court of India. The Attorney General of India, from time to time, was also consulted and had also posed the idea of Regional Benches of the Supreme Court," Mr. Prasad said in his reply.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, TIRUPATI
(An Autonomous Institution under Ministry of HRD., Govt. of India)
Karakambadi Road, Tirupati - 517 507
RECRUITMENT FOR THE POSITION OF POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW (PDRF)
ISER Tirupati invites online applications for Post-Doctoral Research Fellow funded project on "NF-kB signaling in the immune system and cancer" by the Wellcome Trust/DBT India Alliance from Indian nationals having excellent academic record and relevant work experience. For detailed advertisement, please visit www.isertirupati.ac.in and click on the link "Opportunities".
The last date for sending your Application / CV is **March 08, 2020**.
Advt. No. 05/2020/ISER-T/Rect/14-02-2020 Sd/- Registrar

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, TIRUPATI
(An Autonomous Institution under Ministry of HRD., Govt. of India)
Karakambadi Road, Tirupati - 517 507
ISERT/PUR/0753/19 18/02/2020
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR PROVIDING OF DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF ISER TIRUPATI WEBSITE
A pre-indent conference is proposed to be held on **28th February, 2020** at ISER, Tirupati with the prospective manufacturers, their authorized channel partners or agents/suppliers to discuss with the Committee on the aspects of Design, Features, Services and any other essential parameters for providing of Design, Development and Maintenance of ISER Tirupati website.
For further details please visit our website <http://www.isertirupati.ac.in>
Director

Odisha Hydro Power Corporation Ltd. Office of the Project Administrator
Unit: Upper Indravati Hydro Electric Project (Civil Wing)
At/PO: Khatiguda - 764085, Dist. Nabarangpur (Odisha)
Email: cceuihep@gmail.com; FAX: 06858-224324, Tel-06858-224211 / 224307
CIN: U40101OR1995SGC003963 /Dated: 13.02.2020
NOTICE INVITING TENDER No.CCE(C)UIHEP 02 / 2019-20
Sealed Tenders are invited in two parts i.e. (i) Techno Commercial bid & (ii) Price bid from the registered Security Agencies having valid licence & fulfilling the eligibility criteria as per the tender specification for the work as mentioned below.

Sl. No.	Description of Services	Cost of tender paper (Non-refundable) in Rs.	EMD (Refundable) Rs.	Period of availability of tender at OHPCLtd. Website	Date & Time for receipt of Tender	Date & Time of opening of Techno Commercial bid	Place for sale of tender paper	Place for Receipt of tender paper
1	Deployment of Security personnel, at different vital points, under Stores & Mechanical Division / Padaga Dam Division / Muran Dam Division, of Upper Indravati Hydro Electric Project, Khatiguda	Rs.10000/- + GST@18%	2,92,600/-	18.02.2020 to 03.03.2020 up to 4.00 P.M.	11.00 A.M. to 04.03.2020 up to 1.00 P.M.	06.03.2020 at 11.00 A.M.	O/O of the Executive Engineer Stores & Mechanical Division, UIHEP, Khatiguda (2) Corporate Office, OHPCLtd. Vanivihar, Chhatrapati, BBSR-22	(1) O/O of the Executive Engineer Stores & Mechanical Division, UIHEP, Khatiguda (2) Corporate Office, OHPCLtd. Vanivihar, Chhatrapati, BBSR-22

For details of the tender documents, Terms & Conditions, please visit our website www.ohepcltd.com, w.e.f. 18.02.2020, at 11.00 A.M. to 03.03.2020 up to 4.00 PM
Sd/- Chief Construction Engineer (C), UIHEP, Khatiguda
CAD-378; OIPR-32211/11/0005/1920

NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH AT AMARAVATI COMMERCIAL SUIT NO.1 OF 2019.
Piraeus Bank S.A. (also known as Piraeus Bank A.E.) ...Plaintiff Vs. 1. M.V.EVANGELIA M & 27 others ...Defendants

This is hereby given that pursuant to the order dated 9th September, 2019, 24th October, 2019, 21st December 2019 and 31st January 2020 passed by His Lordship Sri Justice M.Venkata Ramana of the Hon'ble High Court of Andhra Pradesh, Amaravati in I.A.No.18 and 19 of 2019 in COMMERCIAL SUIT NO.1 OF 2019 respectively, the Registrar (Judicial), High Court of Andhra Pradesh has been directed to auction the vessel M.V.EVANGELIA M (IMO No.9506708) described in schedule hereunder, lying at the port of Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, by inviting bids in sealed covers in US Dollars at the office situated on the second floor of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, Nelapadu, Amaravati-52237.

The vessel will be sold on "as is where is, what is there is" basis. The intending bidders may give their offer(s) in sealed envelope with Earnest Money Deposit of \$41,852 (USD Forty-one thousand eight hundred and fifty-two) by way of wire transfer (foreign inward remittance) to State Bank of India, Guntur Main Branch, Account Number 38969202369, Swift code SBININBB181, routing number SBIN000844 (excluding bank charges) in favour of Registrar (Judicial), High Court of Andhra Pradesh and obtain tender forms indicating the sale conditions, from the office of the Assistant Registrar (Sri R.Karthikeyan), High Court of Andhra Pradesh, Amaravati on all working days till 4.15 pm between 20th February, 2020 to 3rd March, 2020 and can also be downloaded from the website of Registrar (Judicial) (www.kakinadasesaports.in). The sealed tenders will be submitted to the Registrar (Judicial) in-person or by post till 2.00 pm on 4th March, 2020. The offer in sealed covers will be placed for opening, before the Hon'ble Adminally Judge (Civil Admissions) of the Hon'ble High Court of Andhra Pradesh on 11.03.2020 at 02.15 pm or on such adjourned date as the Court may fix.

The bidder(s)/offerer(s) shall remain present before the Hon'ble Adminally Judge (Civil Admissions) of the Hon'ble High Court, Andhra Pradesh on 11.03.2020 at 2.15 pm. The successful bidder shall pay the balance consideration by 30.03.2020.

The specifications of the vessel are given below:
Name of the vessel: "EVANGELIA M"
1. Call sign "D5GB2/16409"
2. Year of Built/Place: 2010/Yangzhou Guoyu Shipping Co.Ltd, China
3. IMO Number: 9506708
4. LOA: 189.99 metres
5. Breadth: 32.26 metres
6. Depth: 18.00 metres
7. Summer Dead weight: 56723.99 metric tons
8. Main Engine: Wärtsila 6RT-Flex 50B Diesel Engine 9480 bhp @ 124 rpm
9. Cargo Capacity: 71634 m³
10. Classification Society - Bureau Veritas-B.V.
11. Type of vessel: Bulk carrier
12. Bunkers on board - Fuel Oil-86 metric ton

Diesel Oil-4 Metric ton
Lube Oil-Nil
Bilges-Contain water and oil mixture.
13. P & I Club - Hydr AS
14. Net Tonnage - 19,231 tonnes
15. Gross Tonnage - 33,005 tonnes
16. Owner of the Ship - SEA MAJESTY INC.
17. Flag - Liberia
18. Port of Registry - NEW YORK, USA.
Intending bidders may inspect the above vessel at Kakinada Harbour between 10.00am and 5.00pm on all working days from 20th February, 2020 onwards to 3rd March, 2020. The inspection expenses shall be borne exclusively by the intending bidders. The intending bidders shall leave a request in writing to the HARBOUR MASTER, KAKINADA PORT, KAKINADA, one day in advance of the choice of the date for carrying out inspection. The inspection expenses incurred by the Port shall be shared by the intending bidders.
The reserve price is fixed at \$ 7,300,000 (USD seven million, three hundred thousand only). The Exchange rate is INR 71.68 per US Dollar as on 20th November, 2019.
Dated this 13th day of February, 2020.
(OSD)
/c Registrar (Judicial)