

# GOA FOREST NEWS

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**COVER STORY**

**HON'BLE FOREST MINISTER VISITS SATPAL ARBORETUM**

**SPECIAL FEATURE**

**WORLD FORESTRY DAY CELEBRATION**

**BREAKING NEWS**

**HIPPOTAMUS PAIR AT BONDLA ZOO**

# GOA FOREST NEWS

EDITORIAL

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Dear Readers,

The new year ushered in a pair of Hippopotamus which added to the animal collection in the pride of our State, Bondla Zoo.

The animals have been procured from Mysore Zoo and has been widely accepted with cheer by the public as is evidence from the wide and positive coverage given by our local newspapers.

The Forest Department has been equally on a strong path of development under the able leadership of our benevolent Forest Minister Mrs. Alina Saldanha and dynamic Chief Minister Mr. Manohar Parrikar.

We are pleased to place this issue before you, our readers, covering a wide range of topics in this quarter.

With best wishes

Editor

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## VISITOR FACILITATION CENTER AT SATPAL ARBORETUM

Hon'ble Forest Minister inaugurates the centre during her visit to Satpal



*Mrs. Alina Saldanha,  
Hon'ble Forest Minister  
inaugurating the  
Visitor Facility Centre  
at Satpal Arboretum;  
Mr. Ganesh Gaonkar,  
Hon'ble MLA  
Sanvordem and Mr.  
Richard D'Souza,  
PCCF, Goa are also  
seen in the picture*

The Hon'ble Minister for Forests Mrs. Alina Saldanha inaugurated a Visitor Facilitation Centre at Satpal Arboretum in the presence of Mr. Ganesh Gaonkar, Hon'ble MLA of Sanvordem constituency, Mr. Richard D'Souza, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Goa, Mr. S. K. Aggarwal, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests & MD GFDC and other senior Forest Officers.

Satpal Arboretum was established in 1974 over an area of 24.50 hectares. The arboretum consists of 82 plots of different species of trees. An arboretum is an area where different kinds of trees, shrubs, vines, etc are grown for study and research. An arboretum differs from a botanical garden in that the emphasis is placed on the growing of a particular kind of plants, whereas in a botanical garden, all types of plants and trees are grown.

The trees and plants grown at Satpal Arboretum includes 13 species of bamboos, numerous medicinal plants, shrubs and herbs. Apart from these, different plots having plants specific to ancient Indian philosophy and mythology have been

developed in order to sensitise the visitors of India's rich heritage.

The Arboretum is geometrically laid out into over 80 plots of equal area and each plot is planted with a specific species of plant or tree species. It also has several subject specific plots like Rashi Nakshatra Van, Swasthya Van, Navagraha Van, Saptarishi Van, Medicinal Plants, Cactus House, etc. which is ideal for school and college students for study.

The Visitor Facilitation Centre was constructed by the Forest Department to provide basic facilities for visiting students and members of the public during their study at the Arboretum.



## HIPPOPOTAMUS PAIR ARRIVE AT BONDLA ZOO

### Part of exchange program with Mysore Zoo



**B**ondla Zoo has added a pair of Hippopotamus to its collection. The pair were brought from Mysore Zoo by a team of Officers from Goa. The transportation team consisted of Mr. Vishwas Chodankar, RFO of Bondla Zoo along with Dr. Satyavan Naik, Veterinary Officer from Department of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Sciences.

Hippopotamus are exotic herbivorous animals native of the African continent. They are huge and ferocious animals and in spite of their bulk are known to sprint short distances at considerable speed.

They spend much of their day life under water surfacing occasionally for breathing and during night time. They feed both above and under water and can actually walk on the ground under water for feeding on aquatic plant life.

The hippopotamus pair at Bondla are less than a year old and have been bred at Mysore Zoo. The male has been named

Devidas and the female as Saundarya by the Mysore Zoo authorities and they continue under the same name at Bondla Zoo.

The staff at Bondla Zoo take pride in the addition to the Zoo and are taking special care to make the animals feel at home. They are presently kept under quarantine and may be placed for public viewing shortly.

The number of visitors to the Zoo has increased considerably over the last few years because of the spurt of addition of new animals to the Zoo collection.

There have been addition of a pair of Tigers followed by colourful pheasants and now the pair of Hippopotamus. With the development of the Master Plan for Bondla Zoo over the next ten years, the Zoo has been a site for hectic activity both from the management perspective as well as from the perspective of conservation education.

*The Hippopotamus pair at the quarantine enclosure at Bondla Zoo*



# SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

## DORMITORIES AT SATPAL INNAUGURATED



Mr. Ganesh Gaonkar, Hon'ble MLA of Sanvordem constituency inaugurated the Dormitory facility at Satpal Arboretum in the presence of Mrs. Alina Saldanha, Hon'ble Minister of Forests and Mr. Richard D'Souza, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Goa.

This facility is to provide basic accommodation for students and Officers visiting Satpal Arboretum for studies at a nominal rate. The dormitory has facility to house ten beds with two toilets and bathroom. It is well furnished and the Hon'ble Forest Minister wished that the maintenance of the dormitory should be done properly.

## SATPAL ARBORETUM BROCHURE RELEASED

Mrs. Alina Saldanha, Hon'ble Forest Minister released a brochure on Satpal Arboretum at a simple function at Satpal. Other dignitaries present during the function were Mr. Ganesh Gaonkar, Hon'ble MLA of Sanvordem constituency, Mr. Richard D'Souza, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Goa, Mr. S. K. Aggarwal, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests & MD, GFDC and other senior Forest Officers.

The brochure was edited by Debendra Dalai, IFS and designed by Amar Heblekar, RFO. It was published for the use of visitors to Satpal Arboretum to provide them a brief introduction to the Arboretum and also as a guide to the various locations of the plots and plants available at the Arboretum.

It also includes a layout map of the area with all the 82 plots of the Satpal Arboretum. It is proposed to provide it free of cost to the visitors of the Arboretum. The brochure has been appreciated by the Hon'ble Forest Minister as well as the Hon'ble MLA.

The various theme based plots like Nakshatra Van, Saptarishi Van, Medicinal Plants plots etc are also described in the brochure.



*Top:  
Inauguration of the dormitory at the hands of Mr. Ganesh Gaonkar, Hon'ble MLA in presence of Mrs. Alina Saldanha, Hon'ble Forest Minister and Mr. Richard D'Souza, IFS, PCCF.*

*Below:  
Mrs. Alina Saldanha, Hon'ble Forest Minister releasing the brochure.*

## Strangers in the Night by Benhail Antao

A few years ago I had gone camping along the Western Ghats of India. As I recall, it was a cold winter's night, when I decided to set out to explore the jungle around me.

It was buzzing with sounds of various insects and other nocturnal creatures. A Night Jar was perched in the foliage above, close enough for me to hear it, but camouflaged well enough to be out of sight.

As I continued to walk along the forest I noticed a narrow trail ahead of me almost a glow under the light of the full moon.

I could feel a gentle warm breeze through the forest giving it an air of almost surreal calmness. Suddenly I heard a strange noise in the foliage above me. Instinctively I looked upwards. At first I saw nothing. But then when I looked closer, I saw a pair of large closely set brown eyes.

My heart raced and I couldn't believe my luck as I realised what I was looking at was an extremely rare little creature and quite definitely one on our endangered species list, known as the Slender Loris (Louis Tarrigradus).

This incredibly cute, small primate could easily fit into the palm of your hand. However few people know that these little creatures used to send shivers down the spines of hunters from indigenous tribes in the Ghats as it was said to bring bad luck during their hunt. This worked for a while till people got the wiser and realized how fragile these creatures are. Then they began to kill them on sight which led to a fall in their population. Deforestation and mining over



the years has taken a huge toll on the Slender Loris making their chances for survival quite slender indeed.

The Slender Loris is now restricted to small patches of Southern India and Sri Lanka. It is a nocturnal primate that is arboreal, which means that its habitat is restricted to the foliage of trees. It is found to grow upto 25cm long, and weighs upto 250grams.

During the day they sleep high in the trees in the forks of branches, curled up with their heads between their legs. As night sets in, they move out in search of food. They are mostly insectivorous though they have been known to feed on slugs, worms, tree sap/gum, the eggs of small birds and sometimes even on small vertebrates like lizards.

Their cute and cuddly disposition has in fact turned out to be their downfall as they have fallen prey to poachers and smugglers who have found a handsome price for them in the exotic pet trade racket.

In places like china they are said to possess medicinal powers. Though this is entirely untrue, it has led to the Slender Loris being forced almost to the very brink of survival.

The Slender Loris is now protected under the Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Protection Act of India of 1972.

*The author Benhail Antao is a resident of Moira, Bardez and is a wildlife enthusiast. He also is a volunteer in the rescue of snakes and other wild animals.*



## WORLD FORESTRY DAY CELEBRATED

Programmes arranged at Pissonem and Ponda



The Forest Department organised programs to mark the World Forestry Day at Ponda and Pissonem. A seminar was organised at the Conference Hall of the Goa Forest Department on Biodiversity of the Western Ghats.

Mr. Richard D'Souza, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests inaugurated the seminar in the presence of Mr. S. K. Aggarwal, Chief Conservator of Forests & Managing Director, Goa Forest Development Corporation, Mr. D. N. F. Carvalho, Conservator of Forests, Wildlife & Ecotourism, Panaji and other senior Officers of the Goa Forest Department.

While addressing the gathering, Mr. Richard D'Souza stressed on the need for conserving the lesser fauna along with the tiger and other larger animals in the protected areas.

An eminent environmentalist Mr. Nirmal Kulkarni was invited to make a presentation. During his presentation, Mr. Kulkarni gave special emphasis of the lesser known

fauna of the Chorla Ghat region of Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary.

In a related program organised at Pissonem was organised by Smt. Yasodha K., IFS, Dy. Conservator of Forests, Research & Utilisation Division in the premises of Government High School, Pissonem.

During her address to the gathering of over 500 students, teachers and Officers,



Left, top:  
Mr. Richard D'Souza,  
PCCF addressing  
during the World  
Forestry Day;  
Bottom, right:  
Mr. Nirmal Kulkarni  
giving his presentation





*Right, top:  
Snake awareness  
program demonstration;  
Smt. Yasodha K. IFS,  
DCF Research &  
Utilisation Division  
addressing the  
gathering during World  
Forestry Day*

Smt. Yasodha K. stressed on the need for conservation of forests and appreciated the school students for their high awareness levels of the importance of forests.

The Principal of the school also addressed the children and gave a brief of the activities of the school in conservation education. The programme also included talks by Mr. Paresh Porob RFO who gave a talk on the importance of trees and

biodiversity.

The talk was followed by an interactive session by Mr. Amar Heblekar, RFO FTS Valpoi on importance of snakes in forest conservation. The myths and beliefs related to the snakes were also explained by him. The talk was well received by the students and teachers alike.

Mr. Mangaldas Divshekar, DyRFO





# SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

## V BATCH OF ROUND FORESTERS AT FOREST TRAINING SCHOOL

The V Batch of Round Foresters was formally inaugurated on 27th February 2013 at Forest Training School, Valpoi by Mr. Debendra Dalai, IFS, ex-officio Director of the Forest Training School.

The training will be for a period of one year and will include the syllabus and curricula prescribed by the Forest Research Institute and Colleges, DehraDun.

The Forest Training School, Valpoi is a very well equipped training institute with well laid out classroom, separate hostel facilities for gents and ladies, library and playground.

Five Instructors and a full staff supplements the training program. The present training will also include three tour programs and several excursions and field visits on Saturdays.

## NATURE AWARENESS PROGRAMS CONDUCTED

The staff of the Research & Utilisation Division conducted several Nature Awareness programs throughout the state of Goa in various schools.

Programs were conducted for school children of remote localities like Avem, Cotigao, Gaondongrem and also at Satpal and other places.

The programs were supplemented by inviting Resource Persons from various fields of wildlife and nature conservation. Mementos were also distributed to the participating children with clear message of need for conservation.



## REFRESHER COURSE FOR FOREST OFFICERS

Separate Refresher courses were organised for Officers of the ranks of Deputy Range Forest Officers and Range Forest Officers at the Forest Training School, Valpoi in the month of January 2013.

Experts and Resource Persons from various fields were invited to deliver lectures to the Officers. The topics covered included legal matters, global warming, REDD and REDD+ and other modern issues concerning forest and wildlife conservation.



*Clockwise from top right:  
Refresher course for RFOs in progress;  
Awareness program on snakes;  
Presentation on snake awareness at Canacona taluka*



For the period from January 2013 to March 2013 of the Goa Forest Department.

## RETIRED

The following staff retired on super annuation from the Goa Forest Department:

### Round Forester:

Shri John P. Fernandes

### Upper Division Clerk:

Shri Albino Gracias  
Smt Shilpa S Dessai

### Forest Guard:

Shri Sebastiao Miranda

### Lower Division Clerk:

Smt Roshan Agarwadekar  
Shri Madhu Lambor

### Peon:

Shri Gajanan Kerkar

The Forest Department wishes them a happy and peaceful retired life.

## Mhaka Udhunk Zai...

by Cirilo L. Noronha

Roddkulea tallean gavin git  
Sartanv eksurem jivit  
Pinzreant jivak ailea vit  
Konnuch na korunk nit  
Mhaka udhunk zai  
Varear firunk zai

Jedna hany lhan aslem  
Tedna avoi borabor udhtalem  
Zhaddam-Peddamercher khelltalem  
Khuxalkaiechim gitam gaitalem  
Mhaka udhunk zai  
Varear firunk zai

Aiz bonddkhonn hany bhogtanv  
Varear firtoleank polleun roddtanv  
Svontrtai mellounk tolmoltanv  
Avoiche ubhek axeun axetanv  
Mhaka udhunk zai  
Varear firunk zai

Svontr desant mekhli vatt sodtanv  
Pinzreantlean suttkha ghaunk axetanv  
Vann-odhikareank ulo martanv  
Bondd dovortoleacher zopt ghalunk  
magtanv  
Mhaka udhunk zai  
Varear firunk zai

**Konkani poem submitted by  
Cirilo L. Noronha, Forest Guard**

## AWARENESS PROGRAM AT SATPAL ARBORETUM

An awareness program was arranged for children of Sanjay School, Porvorim by the Range Forest Officer, Research & Utilisation Division, Satpal.

Smt Yasodha K. IFS, Deputy Conservator of

Forests, Research & Utilisation Division was the Chief Guest for the function.

The school children were informed about the various medicinal plants found in Goa and were also given information about the various plants in our rich heritage.



Extreme Left:  
The school children  
chanting a prayer at the  
program;  
Left:  
View of the Facilitation  
Centre at Satpal  
Arboretum



*Mrs. Alina Saldanha, Hon'ble Forest Minister reading an issue of GOA FOREST NEWS; Mr. Ganesh Gaonkar, Hon'ble MLA, Sanvordem and Mr. Richard D'Souza, PCCF are also seen. (Below) Senior Forest Officers reading the GOA FOREST NEWS*



**... a few candid  
moments for GOA  
FOREST NEWS!**

## POSER

Identify the inflorescence in the accompanying picture. Mail in your entries so as to reach us on or before 15th June 2013 at the editorial office address, or send it by email to [aheble@gmail.com](mailto:aheble@gmail.com).

The winner will be suitably rewarded. Sender must mention the complete mailing address.



### ANSWER TO LAST ISSUE'S POSER

"Aloe vera "

WINNER:

Shri Ajinkh Phondekar,  
Taleigao.





**EVERY TIME  
YOU ADMIRE  
SOMETHING IN  
NATURE, IT'S A  
PRAYER TO  
THE CREATOR**



  
**JOIN HANDS WITH THE  
GOA FOREST DEPARTMENT  
TO PROTECT & CONSERVE OUR  
NATURAL HERITAGE**

**THE GREATNESS OF A NATION  
AND IT'S MORAL PROGRESS  
CAN BE MEASURED  
BY THE WAY IN WHICH IT'S  
ANIMALS ARE TREATED**

