



VINDHYAN ECOLOGY AND NATURAL HISTORY FOUNDATION

Registered Office: Vindhya Bachao Secretariat, 36/30, Shivpuri Colony, Station Road, Mirzapur. Uttar Pradesh-231001

**VINDHYA
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Ref. VB/Dec/2014

Date: 12th December, 2014

To,

The Principal Secretary

Chief Minister's Office,

Govt. of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow

Subject: Rapid Decline of Wildlife in Mirzapur

Dear Sir,

Greetings from Vindhya Bachao Abhiyan!

We are writing to draw your attention to one of the ignored but rich wildlife areas of Uttar Pradesh, Mirzapur. As your department may be aware, the Mirzapur forest is not only rich in medicinal plants but also known for providing habitat to several animals like Sloth Bear, Swamp Deer, Chinkara, Blackbuck, Mugger Crocodile, Fox, Jackal, Jungle Cat, Wolf, Hyena, Sambar, Chital and many more, some of which are also protected as Schedule I species under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The Ganges river stretch in Mirzapur is also reported to have populations of Dolphin and Turtles which are essential for maintaining the river ecology and sustaining livelihood.

With deep regret, we wish to draw your attention towards the drastic decline in the wildlife in recent years. In a reply to a RTI application by our member Shri Navendu Nidhan about the status of wildlife in Mirzapur, we were provided with the census data of recent years and the results are shocking to say the least. We are attaching the information with this letter as well. A comparison of the wildlife population of few selected species for 2011 and 2013 is shown below:

Species	2011	2013	% Decrease in Population
Chinkara*	277	117	58
Blackbuck*	129	82	36
Sloth Bear*	211	114	46
Sambar	248	88	65
Chital	203	179	12

*Schedule I under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972)

We as citizens of India, and a nature conservation organization, are greatly concerned about the severe and drastic loss of wildlife from the forests in Mirzapur. It is quite evident from our experiences that the forests of Mirzapur are experiencing severe disturbances from human interventions, illegal mining activities, rapid deforestation for fuelwood, encroachments and poaching. Big carnivores like Leopard got recently extinct from the



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forests and other animals are also likely to suffer the same fate if we do not make a conscious and concerted effort to preserve their habitat from further disturbance.

We feel that the State Government needs to take proactive action towards conservation of the forests to protect the biodiversity of Mirzapur. It is very unfortunate that the forests of Mirzapur are not given due attention despite being so rich in biodiversity. This lack of recognition is evident from the fact that though many of the forest ranges in Mirzapur are notified as Reserve Forests, none of them are protected areas (Wildlife Sanctuary or National Park) under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

In view of the critical situation of the wildlife of Mirzapur and considering the fact that the forests of Mirzapur are of great ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphological, natural and zoological significance, and the need to Protect, Propagate and Develop the wildlife and its environment we request you to:

1. Notify the Forests of Mirzapur protected under Wildlife Act, 1972 as Sanctuary/National Park without any further delay.
2. Urgently prepare a 'Wildlife Action and Management Plan' comprising of forests and wildlife experts from reputed institutions like WII, NCBS, WWF and WTI to enhance the survival of the wild flora and fauna.
3. Prohibit any developmental activities within and around the forests of Mirzapur till the areas are declared as Protected Areas as mentioned above.

As per Article 48 -A of the constitution of India 'the state shall endeavor to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wild life of the country', and as per Article 51-A (g), which says that 'It shall be duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life and to have compassion for living creatures'. In view of the spirit of our Constitution, we request that our concerns are be taken seriously and necessary steps are initiated.

Kindly acknowledge the receipt of this representation to debadityo@vindhya Bachao.org or the address undersigned.

Regards,

Debadityo Sinha

For- Vindhyan Ecology and Natural History Foundation

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This letter is endorsed by the following environment and wildlife concerned persons and organizations:

1. Prof. A.S. Raghubanshi, Director, Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi
2. Mr. Mike Pandey, Conservationist Filmmaker and Chairman, Earth Matters Foundation, New Delhi
3. Ms. Cara Tejpal, Assistant Editor, Sanctuary Asia, Mumbai
4. Dr. Bharat Jhunjunwala, Economist and Formerly Professor at IIM Bangalore



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5. Prof. Ajit Tyagi, Koteswaram Professor, Former Director General of Meteorology, Ministry of Earth Sciences
6. Mr. Shripad Dharmadhikari, Manthan Adhyayan Kendra, Pune
7. Shri Gopal Krishna, Toxics Watch Alliance
8. Shri Maheshanand, Gram Swaraj Samiti, Sonbhadra
9. Shri Suresh Kumar, Trustee, Vanamitra, Bangalore
10. Shri Joydeep Kundu and Suchandra Kundu, Society for Heritage & Ecological Researches (SHER)
11. Mr. Aman Agarwal, Vice President, Plant for the Planet
12. Ms Akanksha Sood Singh, Film maker and Head of Production - Kosmik Global Media Private Limited, Noida
13. Mr. Gurmeet Sapal, Film maker & Conservationist, New Delhi
14. Zalina Gamat, Filmmaker, New Delhi
15. Dr. Joystu Dutta, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Environmental Sciences, Sarguja University, Ambikapur
16. Dr. Arunava Dutta, Dept. of Community Ecology, Hemholtz Centre for Environmental Research-UFZ, Germany (Alumnus of Dept. of Botany, Banaras Hindu University)
17. Shri Vimal Bhai, Matu Jansangathan, New Delhi
18. Shri Shailendra Singh Jadeja, Environmentalist, Ahmedabad
19. Dr. Jaswant Kalair, Wildlife Biologist, Lakhimpur Kheri
20. Mr. Vibhav Srivastava, Wildlife Biologist, Allahabad
21. Mr. Ahmad Masood Khan, Research Scholar, Department of Wildlife Sciences, Aligarh Muslim University
22. Mr. Ashutosh Singh, Research Scholar, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun
23. Ms. Smitha Daniel, Research Scholar, Department of Zoology, University of Mysore
24. Mr. Akash Bhatia, Founder & CEO, Infinite Analytics, Cambridge, United States
25. Ms. Parul Gupta, Environmental Lawyer, New Delhi
26. Shri Govind Tiwari, MBA in Forest Management, IIFM and Formerly Project Officer, Foundation for Ecological Security
27. Shri Shiv Kumar Upadhyay, Dr. Laxmi Goparaju, Shri Raghav Saraswat, Mr. Pankaj Kumar, Mr. Navendu Nidhan and other members- Vindhyan Ecology and Natural History Foundation, Mirzapur

Copy of this letter is marked to:

1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow
2. Chief Conservator of Forests, Mirzapur
3. Additional DG of Forests (WL), Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change

Enclosed:

1. RTI reply of the Wildlife Census of Mirzapur for year 2009, 2011 and 2013 obtained from Forest Department, Mirzapur.