

“Transformation of Lives”



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This document covers transformation of lives of the local people who depend on tiger tourism around Ranthambhore national park. Many biased opinion have been voiced with improper data and methodology, which can damage not just the local people's future but also the tiger's future. This document brings to light many aspects of tourism and the people associated with the industry. The benefits of tourism do not go only to a few major hotels, but are also reaped by the local people of Ranthambhore. The compilers have put together few stories of people, whose lives have changed for the better because of tourism. These people are representative of various odd businesses, the compilers could write about in a short span- there are many still left to cover.

Rajasthan is the largest state in the Republic of India. The main geographic features of Rajasthan are the Thar Desert and the Aravalli Range, which runs through the state from southwest to northeast, almost from one end to the other, for more than 850 km.

Sawai Madhopur , a small town, lies about 180kms to the north-east of Jaipur. This town, at the junction of the Vindhya and the Aravali ranges, is famous historically because of the Ranthambhore Fort; and is ecologically significant, because of a strong population of Tigers present in the Tiger reserve within its limits- Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve. These are the last representatives of the tigers of the Aravali hill range.

Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve is geographically unique, as no other Tiger Reserve in India experiences temperatures of a scorching 48-50 0C (Summer) and a drop to 3 C (and lower in winter), with an annual rainfall of 650mm; and yet possesses a rich biodiversity including the Tiger. The terrain of Ranthambhore tiger reserve is mostly rugged and hilly. The hills to the northwest of fault-line are the Aravalis and typically have ridges on one side and gentle slope on the other. Due to this rugged terrain and extreme temperatures and inconsistent rainfall, the vegetation is sparse and scattered.

According to the Bio-geographic classification (Rodgers & Panwar ,1988), Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve falls in 4 B (Semi-arid zone and Gujrat-Rajwara biotic province). The area forms a transition zone between the true desert and seasonally wet peninsular India. The area exhibits a good number of *Anogeissus pendula* or *Dhonk* trees. Apart from the Tiger, other forms of wildlife that are spotted in the Park are: Spotted Deer, Sambar, Leopards, Sloth Bear, Indian Gazelle, and so on.

History of the Tiger in Rajasthan:

In the early 19th century the Ranthambhore forests were private hunting reserves of the Maharajas of Jaipur. Till the mid 1950s the Tiger was well spread and present in more than a few parts of Rajasthan. Good visibility, which now draws tourists to see tigers, is also what unfortunately favored poachers as well. This easy accessibility of poachers to Tigers and their habitats, along with many other factors led to a drastic drop in Tiger population in the Aravali region. Because of excessive poaching, tigers vanished from the forest areas of- Vanvihar Sanctuary (Dholpur), Darrah Sanctuary (Kota) and Bundi among other areas. Though the Wildlife Protection Act (1973), forbid the killing of any wild animal including the tiger, illegal hunting and poaching still continued.

In Rajasthan, till the 70s Tigers were present in the areas of Udaipur, Mt. Abu and Chittorgarh; by the 80s, there were none remaining. Tigers started disappearing from the areas of Ramgarh Bisdhari Sanctuary by the early 90s and Kailadevi Wildlife Sanctuary by the late 90s. This situation continued and worsened till 2005, when Sariska Tiger Reserve's last tigers were killed. The main reasons behind the population decline were: Poaching, rapid increase in human population; thus pressurizing the forests for acquiring forest resources and a rise of villages within protected areas.

Whatever number of Tigers that remained in Ranthambhore was due to the efforts of Mr. Fateh Singh Rathore, a noted conservationist in India. During 1977-79 he aided in the relocation of 12 villages within Ranthambhore and helped develop it as a tourist destination. He also published photographs, made video documentaries and films to popularize Ranthambhore. His work was encouraged and appreciated by the Late Rajiv Gandhi, the 6th Prime Minister of India (1984-1989). Eventually, Ranthambhore became one of the best Tiger Reserves to observe the Tiger.

Tourism didn't have unplanned growth in Ranthambhore. Experts like Mr. Valmik Thapar, Mr. G V Reddy along with forest department came up with rules and regulations which were implemented in the park more than a decade ago. Due to this move, today a maximum 45 safari vehicles are allowed in the park and that to in divided zones to avoid congregation of vehicles in one area. This is the one reason why tourists sighting from 10 tigers in one safari to one tiger in 4-5 safari (records up to 17 different tigers in one safari exist). And this is the reason where once there was a money back guarantee for tiger sighting, today no such claim exists.

This controlled tourism trade has created a goodwill for the tigers and a lobby of all the people benefitting due to the tiger tourism is created. The spin of the business has a unfathomable reach which the researchers, scientists and the policy makers may understand.

In 2005, it was declared that there were no more tigers in Sariska. The Forest Department of Ranthambhore felt the need to enhance anti-poaching efforts. They thus contacted and approached people from the field of wildlife and tourism and formed a union named 'Operation Co-operation'. Many, vital people associated with poaching were arrested. Details are given in further chapters.

Tourism in Ranthambhore

The number of vehicles entering the park has not increased since the decided 45 vehicles per safari, 10 years ago. So there is a limit to the number of tourists entering the park each day. This proves to be a limitation for the whole tourism business in Ranthambhore.

The vehicles disperse into 5 zones to avoid congestion and disturbance to the wildlife. These 'Zones' are basically 5 tracks to which vehicles are supposed to stay on. This proves to be another limitation, as the vehicles cannot go off route. Recently forest department added 3 more zones (6, 7 and 8). Only zone number 6 is a preferred zone for tourists outside the national park, while the other two are not.

Zone 1: Covers the Singdwar-Patwa-Bodal Route

Zone 2: Lahpur-Nalghati-Bodal area

Zone 3: Covers the three big lakes- Padam, Rajbagh and Milik.

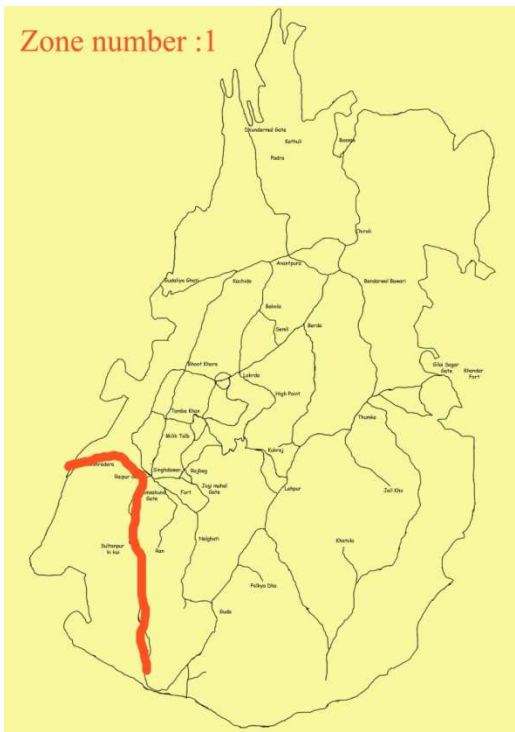
Zone 4: Covers the Semli- Berda area

Zone 5: Covers the Kachida-Bakola area.

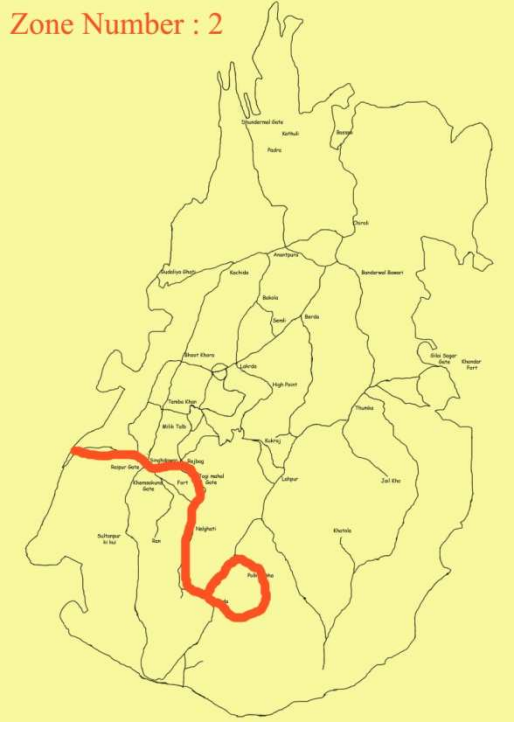
Zone 6: Kundal area

Zone 7: Chidi kho

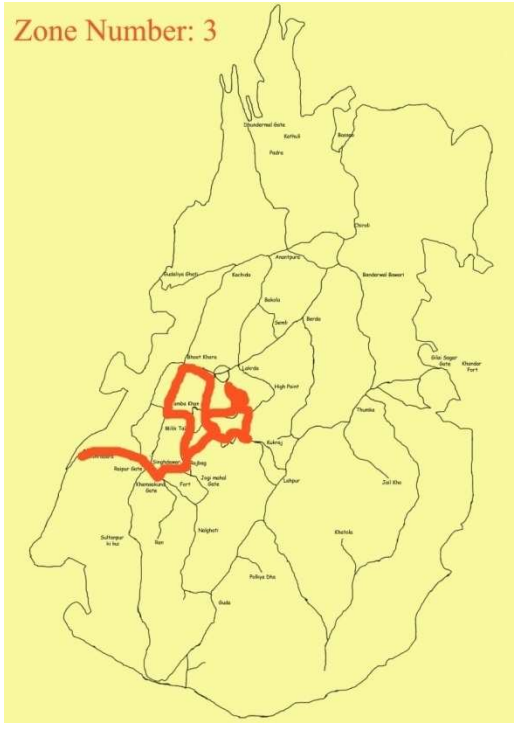
Zone 8: Balas



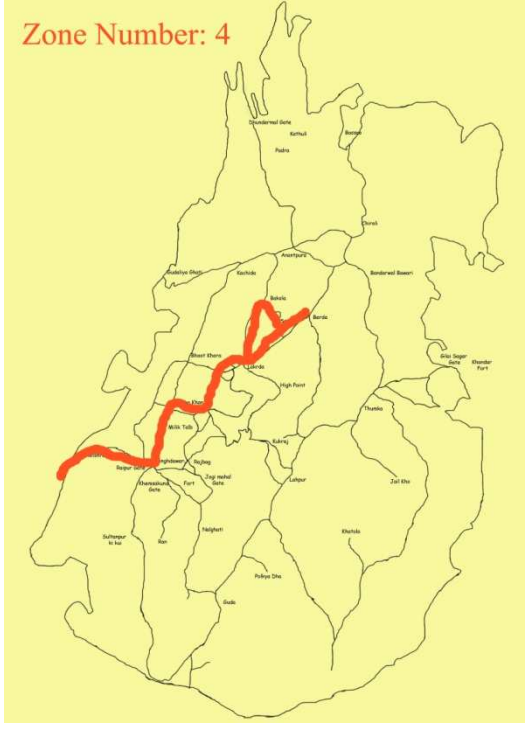
Zone 1: Singdwar-Patwa-Bodal



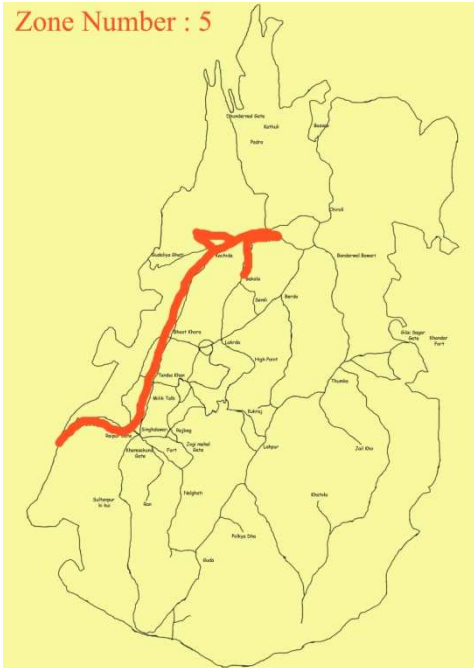
Zone 2: Lahpur-Nalghati-Bodal area Area



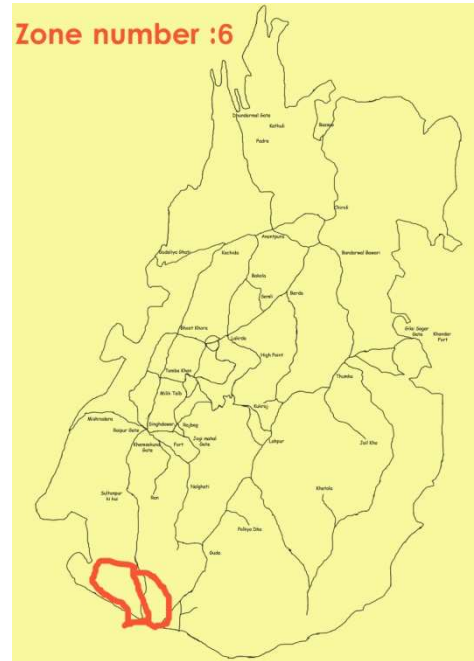
Zone 3: Encircles the three big lakes- Padam, Rajbagh and Milik.



Zone 4: Semli- Berda Area



Zone 5: Covers the Kachida-Bakola area.



Zone 6: Kundal area.



Zone 7: Chidi kho area.



Zone 8: Balas area.

The Local Story

Tourism is the main sector that employs thousands of people in and around Ranthambhore. 'Locals', in this case, can be defined as those people who are born and brought up in the two tehsils of Sawai Madhopur districts viz. Khandar and Sawai Madhopur. The lives of many local people associated with anti forestry activities like illegal grazing, wood cutting, mining and poaching have been transformed due to this green industry that has provided them with alternative jobs.

Fig. 1 shows estimate percentages of the people residing in Ranthambhore, whose Livelihood directly depend on and is influenced by tourism.

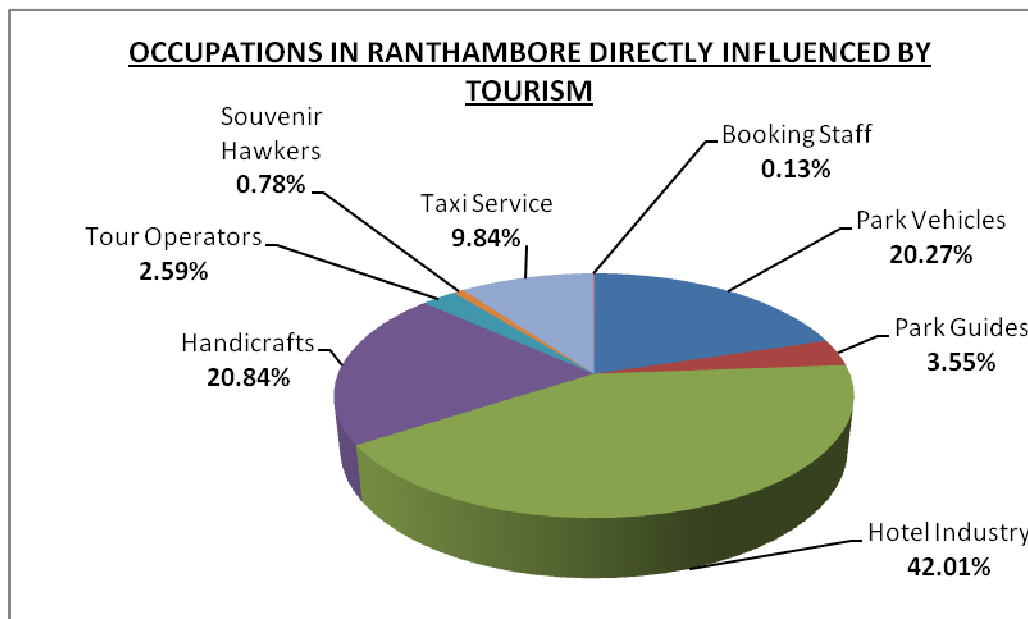


Fig 1(a): Percentages of different occupations, directly influenced by tourism

Only a few of the occupations directly associated to tourism have been represented in the pie chart above. There are many more groups of people whose incomes depend on tourism indirectly while their businesses are not just restricted to tourists, though heavily influenced by it. **(See Table :1)**

Many more occupations directly and indirectly associated to tourism have been listed below Fig 1(b):

There are an estimate **3,863 individuals**, directly associated with the tourism Industry.

Table :1 Different occupations and people associated with tourism

Industry	Specifications	Numbers		Percentage %
Hotel Management & Staff	Permanent	1123	1623	42.01
	Contracted	500		
Handicrafts	Independent Stores	595	805	20.84
	In Hotels	40		
	Painting artist	170		
Tour Operators	Also assistant etc	100	100	2.59
Souvenir Hawkers		30	30	0.78
Taxi Service	Owners	200	380	9.84
	Drivers	180		
Tkt Booking Staff		5	5	0.13
Park Vehicles	Owners	403	783	20.27
	Drivers	380		
Park Guides	Naturalist	104	137	3.55
	EDC guide Kundal/ Balas	33		
TOTAL			3863	100

**OTHER BENEFICIARIES OF TOURISM
not included in 3863.....**

1. Grocery Suppliers
2. Vegetable Suppliers
3. Poultry Suppliers
4. Meat Supplies Suppliers
5. Milk Suppliers
6. Computer Dealers
7. Computer Maintenance
8. Printing Press Owners
9. Accountants
10. Restaurant Owners and staff
11. Tea Stall owners and staff
12. Garage Owners
13. Fabricators
14. Gypsy/Canter Seat Cover Makers
15. Gardeners
16. Offseason Hotel Staff
17. Guava Fruit Sellers
18. Camel Ride operators
19. Tailors (Uniform Makers)
20. Junior Staff at Stores
21. Security Personnel
22. Naturalists (Private)
23. Attendants
24. Coolies
25. NGOs who work for the benefit of locals.

Fig 1(b): List of additional beneficiaries of Tourism

There's no denying that after conducting a thorough survey these numbers are bound to increase.

There are 68 hotels in Ranthambhore which are in various budget levels, which depending upon the room rates per night can be grouped as:-

Category 1: Above Rs. 25,000

Category 2: Rs. 20,000-25,000

Category 3: Rs. 10,000- 15,0000

Category 4: Rs. 5,000- 10,000

Category 5: Rs. 1500- 4,500

Category 6: Rs. 1000 and below.

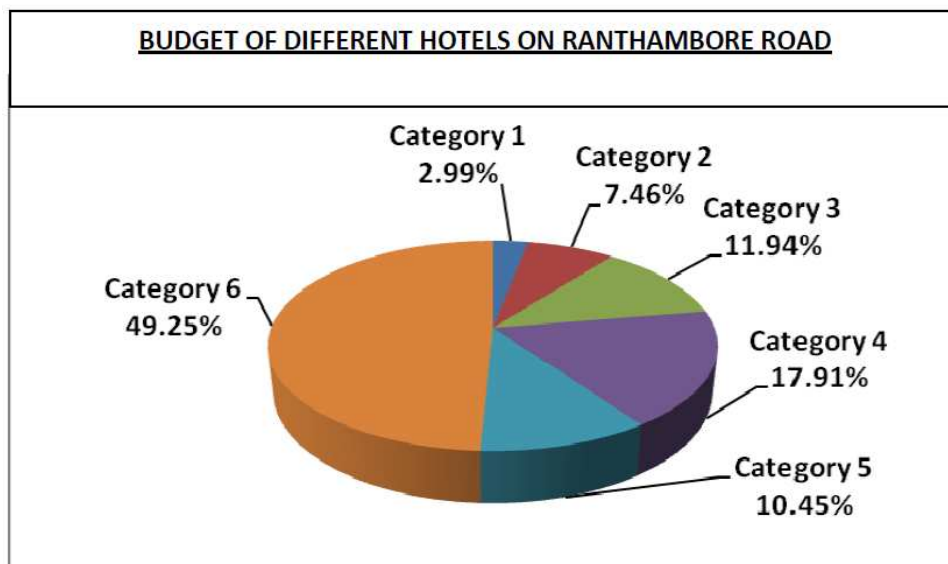
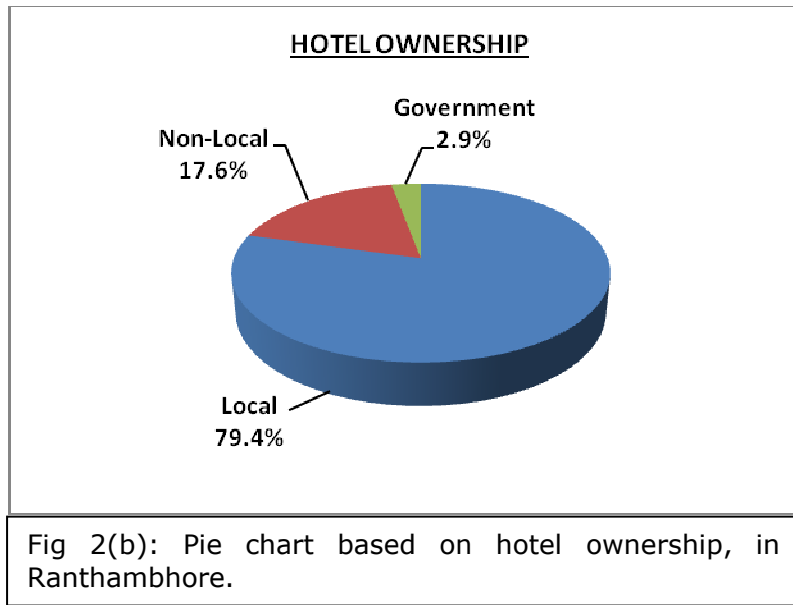


Fig 2(a): Different budget divisions (based on room rates per night) of the hotels on Ranthambhore Road by tourists in Ranthambhore.

The general public opinion is that the hotel industry in Ranthambhore is monopolized by business giants and chain owners who are not local. Contrary to this popular belief, most of the hotel owners are local, as seen in Fig 2(b).



The hotels owned by locals fall under various budget levels and are not restricted to the lower tariff level types.

Not so 'Menial'

An argument many people have given against the tourism industry is that the local people are given 'menial' jobs. And how would one describe a 'menial job'? To make it clear, the dictionary describes it as a job lacking prestige. If an unskilled person happy doing what he does, by using the skills he possess and earns enough to run his life, provide for his family and send his children to school, would that job be described as 'menial'? It is a derogatory term to be used for someone's occupation. In Ranthambhore, there are many examples of people who started off at low paying positions and then were later promoted to higher positions. It depends upon person to person and the skills that they posses. Using this term is an insult to all people who start out small, but still make an effort to be a part of the industry. Tourism, keeps the interest of the local people, local politicians and policy makers in Ranthambhore alive. The strong lobby formed due to the interest of the tourism industry in the Park actually results in keeping the government department active, at least to some extent, as there is an outcry the moment some discrepancies are noticed.

VI) An Educative tool: Increasing Awareness

“Seeing is believing”

This statement is highly relevant when it comes to nature. One cannot be environmentally sensitive by just sitting at home and watching nature based shows. Nature is best when one experiences it; and there is no better way to experience nature than in a National Park. Anyone, whether they are a wildlife enthusiast or a schoolchild, corporate employee or a home-maker will never forget the first time they saw a Tiger in the wild. No one is born a wildlife enthusiast. Many of our leading conservationists must have started out as tourists, and that is why tourism in National Parks; especially in today’s day and age, has a major role to play. With the ever growing bustling cities and with the television and internet taking over our lives, we tend to be absorbed in ourselves all the time. No room or importance is given to environmental awareness, which is why fewer people care about the environment.

If the motive is ‘Tiger Conservation’, then let people experience watching the Tiger. Then only will they understand its significance. They will understand that such animals are not possessions that should be showcased in zoos. They will know that such animals have a bigger role to play, ecologically. If people don’t get to see wildlife, how can one expect them to be sensitive about wildlife? Many children will grow up to be decision makers. We need to think about the future conservationists before taking such a step.

VII) Suggestions:

There are very few business in the world where 45 safari vehicles can give employment to thousands of people. There is no other employment alternative in Ranthambhore which would gain the local economy without damaging the ecosystem. It is important to maintain the betterment of the park and community living around it. For this it is vital to enforce rules and regulations to control tourism pressure. A few suggestions regarding tourism in Ranthambhore so as to contain its impact are:

1. We have to ensure the vehicle limit remains 45 vehicles and for this the outside facilities should also be limited. Some researchers mentioned that only .001% people are directly benefiting from tourism in Ranthambhore (Karanth and De Fries 2010). How can 27 tigers of Rantahmbhore provide employment to 27 lakh people living around Ranthambhore tiger reserve? Ranthambhore through its years of management has reached its optimum tourism earning capacity.

2. The biggest problem with hotel industry is size of the hotel, construction type and location. In Ranthambhore, there is a rule that no hotel should be constructed in the 500 meter area of the park. It is most illogical rule that keep supporters away from the park. If the restriction on the construction area in land than this would keep the area more animal friendly. The rest of the area can be spared for native plantations. Presently around Ranthambhore farmers and grazers encroach upon forest land. Farmers have direct conflict with the prey species and grazers have confrontation with predators. Last year two tigers were poisoned by goat keepers, when they killed 2 goats. This is just one of the examples.

It is a good thing all the hotels of Ranthambhore are not in the corridor area between two protected areas and it is limited around one tourists entry gate.

3. Proper scientific research needs to be carried out before suggesting the impacts of tourism on Tigers and their habitat.

4. A percentage of the park fee collected should be used for community conservation.

It is true, a fact will remain forever a fact. A suggestion will never give rise to facts till practiced. The fact is- a lot of people in Ranthambhore depend on tourism for their livelihood. The fact is- that their lives will change drastically if the tourism industry is affected. The fact is- no one knows what will become of the Tiger if tourism in Ranthambhore will be banned.

The stories of their lives.

Following are a few stories about people who are associated to the tourism industry. What is listed below is only the tip of the iceberg. This only goes on to highlight, how crucial the existence of the tourism industry is to the people of Ranthambhore.

Monitoring and protection work by tourism people:

1. A co-operative anti-poaching effort

In 2005, after it was declared that there were no more tigers in Sariska, the Forest Department of Ranthambhore felt the need to enhance anti-poaching efforts. They thus contacted and approached people from the field of wildlife and tourism. After a few meetings they set up a task force with the objective of the forest staff working in collaboration with the tourism industry, to keep poaching in check. This task force was aptly named 'Operation Co-operation'. During the initial months of setting up of this operation, vital people associated with poaching such as Rajmal Mogia, Mangya Mogya amongst many others were nabbed. Tiger Watch was closely associated to this operation. Many driver and guides have also volunteered to be a part of this association.



(Pic: Newspaper Article, 31st January, 2005)

पुर भास्कर

प्रशंसा ऐसा दान है जिसे देने वाला भी धिनम्र होकर देता है और लेने वाला भी सिर झुका कर लेता है।

अज्ञात

2005

का बरसात, खंडार

गंगापुर सिटी : नगर रोड से अतिक्रमण हटाया ◀ 10

सरिस्का में बाघों की संख्या के विवाद के बाद रणथंभौर बाघ परियोजना के अधिकारी चौकस

अब जागा जंगलात महकमा

'आपरेशन-कापरेशन' अभियान छेड़ा

तुरत-फुरत में जंगल से जुड़े गाइडों और टाइगर वाच संस्था के सदस्यों की टीम गठित की, अभयारण्य क्षेत्र से सटे गांवों में दबिश देकर लगातार तीन दिन तक वन्यजीवों का शिकार करने वाली मोगिया जाति के कई लोगों को वन्यजीवों के मांस के साथ गिरफ्तार किया



सवाई माधोपुर, 5 फरवरी • कास। सरिस्का में बाघों की संख्या को लेकर चल रहे 'विवाद' के बाद रणथंभौर बाघ परियोजना के अधिकारी चौकस हो गए हैं। जंगलात महकमे के अला अफसर कई आरसे बाद फिर से जंगल की 'सुध' लेने लगे हैं। महकमे ने इन दिनों अभयारण्य में 'आपरेशन-कापरेशन' अभियान छेड़ रखा है।

एक सप्ताह पूर्व से शुरू हुए इस अभियान में जंगलात महकमे ने 'स्वयंसेवकों' की सहायता से अभयारण्य क्षेत्र से सटे गांवों में दबिश दी और लगातार तीन दिन तक वन्यजीवों का शिकार करने वाली मोगिया जाति के कई लोगों को वन्यजीवों के मांस के साथ गिरफ्तार किया है।

सरिस्का के बाद रणथंभौर नेशनल पार्क में भी कम होती बाघ की 'साइटिंग' से जहां पर्यटन व्यवसाय से जुड़े लोग चिंतित नजर आ रहे हैं वही जंगलात महकमे के अधिकारी इसे मात्र 'इतनाक' बता रहे हैं। सरिस्का में बाघों के अस्तित्व को लेकर मचे बवाल के बाद रणथंभौर नेशनल पार्क के अधिकारी भी चौकाने हो गए हैं। अधिकारियों ने तुरत-फुरत में एक टीम बनाई और इसे दे दिया 'आपरेशन-कापरेशन का नाम'। इस टीम में जंगल से जुड़े गाइडों और टाइगर वाच संस्था के सदस्यों को शामिल किया गया। अभियान के पहले ही दिन गश्त कर रही मोबाइल पार्टी को अभयारण्य से एक गांव से कछुए की हड्डियां एवं तीतर के अलतवा

शिकार के काम में आने वाले उपकरण बरामद किए। इस तरह आपरेशन-कापरेशन टीम को तीन दिन की छापामार कार्रवाई में अभयारण्य से जुड़े गांवों में रह रही मोगिया जाति के लोगों से भालू के नाखून, सोभर का मांस, जंगली किल्ली के बाल, सुअर का मांस सहित अवैध बंदूक एवं विस्फोट सामग्री बरामद की। तीन दिन की सफलता के बाद जंगलात महकमे के अधिकारियों के हाथले बुलंद हो गए। इस अभियान की सफलता के बाद जंगल से जुड़े लोग 'अभयारण्य बचाओ अभियान' में आगे आने लगे हैं। अब देखना यह है कि जंगल की सुरक्षा-संरक्षा एवं संवर्द्धन के लिए जंगलात महकमा उन्हें कितना सहयोग करता है।

(Pic: Dainik Bhaskar, Newspaper Article (5th Feb, 2005))

अभयारण्य में पकड़े शिकारी की जमानत खारिज

‘आपरेशन कापरेशन’ में 31 जनवरी को सांभर
की खाल व मांस सहित पकड़ा गया था

सवाई माधोपुर, 7 फरवरी • रणथंभौर राष्ट्रीय अभयारण्य में इन दिनों चलाए जा रहे ‘आपरेशन-कापरेशन’ अभियान में पकड़े गए आदतन शिकारी की न्यायालय ने जमानत अर्जी खारिज कर दी है।

जंगलात महकमे द्वारा स्वयंसेवकों के सहयोग से चलाए जा रहे ‘आपरेशन कापरेशन’ अभियान में 31 जनवरी को गश्ती दल ने लक्ष्मीपुरा में छापामार कार्रवाई की। इस अभियान में जंगलात महकमे की टीम ने राजमल मोग्या की टापरी से तीस किलो सांभर का मांस और चार पैर सांभर के मय खाल के बरामद किए थे। इसके अलावा दल ने वहां से एक टोपीदार बंदूक, 103 ग्राम बारूद तथा दस छरें सहित कई सामान बरामद किए।

आरोपी को जंगलात महकमे ने गिरफ्तार कर न्यायालय में पेश किया, जहां से उसे 11 फरवरी तक के लिए

जेल भेज दिया गया। इस दौरान शिकारी ने न्यायालय में जमानत के लिए आवेदन किया। कार्यवाहक जिला एवं सेशन न्यायाधीश चंद्रभान गुप्ता ने न्यायिक अभिरक्षा में चल रहे लक्ष्मीपुरा निवासी राजमल पुत्र लालू मोग्या का जमानत प्रार्थना पत्र यह कहते हुए खारिज कर दिया कि वन्य जीव संरक्षण अधिनियम 1972 के तहत दंडनीय अपराध है। सरकार की ओर से लोक अभियोजक बजरंगलाल जाट ने पैरवी की।

कम्प्यूटर प्रायोगिक परीक्षा की तिथि घोषित : राजकीय कन्या महाविद्यालय में अध्ययनरत बीए तथा बीकाम प्रथम वर्ष की छात्राओं की कम्प्यूटर प्रायोगिक परीक्षा की तिथि घोषित कर दी गई है। महाविद्यालय के प्राचार्य ने एक विज्ञप्ति में बताया कि 15 फरवरी को स्वयंपाठी छात्राओं की एवं 17 फरवरी को नियमित छात्राओं की परीक्षा आयोजित की जाएगी।

(Pic: Newspaper Article, 7th February, 2005)

आपत्तिजनक सामग्री के साथ शिकारी गिरफ्तार

वन्य जीवों की अस्थियां, बाल, नाखून आदि बरामद

सवाई माधोपुर, 9 फरवरी • विस्फोटक सामग्री लेकर एक व्यक्ति तालाब के पास है।

राष्ट्रीय उद्यान रणथंभौर बाघ परियोजना क्षेत्र में चलाए जा रहे आपरेशन 'कोआपरेशन' अभियान के तहत वन क्षेत्र में गश्त के दौरान एक शिकारी को आपत्तिजनक सामग्री के साथ गिरफ्तार किया है।

अभियान में क्षेत्रीय वन अधिकारी अरूण कुमार शर्मा एवं उड़न दस्ते के सदस्यों के अलावा स्वयंसेवी संगठनों के कार्यकर्ता जंगल में गश्त कर रहे थे। उन्हें एक मुखबिर ने सूचना दी कि मुई गांव के तालाब के पास वन्य जीवों के अस्थि पंजर, बाल, दांत एवं

विस्फोटक सामग्री लेकर एक व्यक्ति तालाब के पास है।

इस पर क्षेत्रीय वन अधिकारी ने मुई गांव के तालाब के पास पहुंचकर मुई निवासी गोपाल पुत्र गुमान मोग्या को पकड़ा। उससे उल्लू (घुग्घू) के शरीर के अस्थि पंजर, खोपड़ी, पंजे, सियार के बाल, दांत एवं शिकार में प्रयुक्त होने वाले आपत्तिजनक और विस्फोटक सामग्री बरामद की। मुलजिम को बुधवार को न्यायालय में पेश किया गया, जहां से उसे 23 फरवरी तक न्यायिक अभिरक्षा में भेज दिया।

(Pic: Newspaper Article, 9th February 2005)



(Pic: Operation Cooperation team at work, Bhavpur Raid)

2. Additional monitoring eyes

When tourists venture into the tiger's territory on board safari vehicles on earmarked trails, they too may be considered as big watchful eyes' as they yearn for that one tiger sighting. Knowingly or unknowingly, they act as a watchdog. "Why aren't we seeing tigers?" may be an exasperated tourist's oft-repeated question, but probably it has a monitoring value attached to it. That is what tourists can successfully do in protected areas. When anything's amiss, obviously it is the tourists that invariably realize it in the absence of a full strength Forest Department (FD) as a few hundreds of them go in every day in comparison to a beat guard who may be given in charge of such large areas that it becomes physically impossible for him to monitor it on a daily basis!

Such monitoring help rendered by tourists abound in Ranthambhore. In 2009 when the Berda tigress T-4 was injured in a combat with another tiger, it was first reported by a safari vehicle driver. Veterinarians tried their best to treat her deep wounds but she could not be saved. Similarly in 2010 it was first reported by a tourist that there was something wrong with T-24 of the Chidi-kho area in the Sawai Mansingh Sanctuary, part of Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve. It was found later that a thorn of the exotic plant species *Prosopis juliflora* was stuck in one of his paws causing the evident distress. It was promptly removed.

Reports of sudden tiger sightings by tourists in areas where there were none for the past few days or weeks or may be months prompt increased vigilance by the FD staff. Overall, it could be said that this monitoring intervention of tourists helps the FD in saving the species in more ways than one. Many forest officials, conservationists, tourists as well as safari vehicle drivers and guides that we spoke with possess the view that poachers could become braver if they had to fear only the FD, or the wood-gatherer will gain porosity for his activities without those thousand watchful eyes.

If it's the tiger and forests that we wish to save we should not ignore this huge unofficial monitoring group called tourists.

Transformation of life:

1. Safari vehicle owners

The business of operating safari vehicles inside the park and vehicles for transport to and fro major cities Ranthambhore employs at least 750 (Annexure 1, 2 ,3 and 11) people here. There are drivers, managers, booking operators, maintenance staff etc. who work in this business and probably many more connected with it!



(Pic: Shamim Bhai, egg seller, with the first Safari Vehicle of Ranthambhore.)

Mr. Shamim Khan proudly stands with a black and white photograph of himself with the first Jeep that he had purchased. That was 30 years ago when he had graduated from being an *egg-wallah* to a safari vehicle operator. Now his family has 70-odd vehicles, including at least 30 gypsies and canters, that earn them Rs.1880 and Rs.5700 respectively, per trip inside the park. Shamim's family owns other type of vehicles too that transport tourists to and fro major cities by road on demand. There are many such agencies, small and big, that are involved in this business which provide employment to about 500 odd people. These include drivers, maintenance staff, small mechanics, managers, salespersons etc. Khan's vehicles may be called more than once a day or none at all, for Safaris, according to the roster system which allows for only 45 Safari vehicles inside the park at a time.



(Pic: Shamim Bhai with a few of his current employees; he now owns 70 vehicles, including 30 safari vehicles.)

Evidently his business, and the livelihood of a few hundred people associated with it, is heavily dependent on the business of tourism. Shahnawaz, one of Khan's coworker an uneducated man but has worked since many years for tourism has his instincts on, "Tourism nahi rahegi toh tiger bhi nahi rahega sahab" (Its because of tourism that tigers survive sir).

With more than 40 tiger deaths already this year reported from various parks, can we afford an experiment that may risk the existence of tigers from a prestigious Project Tiger reserve like Ranthambhore? These people have good will for the forest only because of the benefits they offer to them.

2. Naturalists/Guides

More than 130 (See Annexure 6) guides and naturalists operate in and around the Ranthambhore National Park earning their daily bread from tourist safari vehicles that venture inside the park, for 9 months of the year. They are deemed as 'qualified' by the Forest department (FD) and put on a roster list. Everyday 40 vehicles venture inside for safari, as per stipulated rules by the forest department, accompanied by a nature guide.



(Pic: Training of Naturalists)

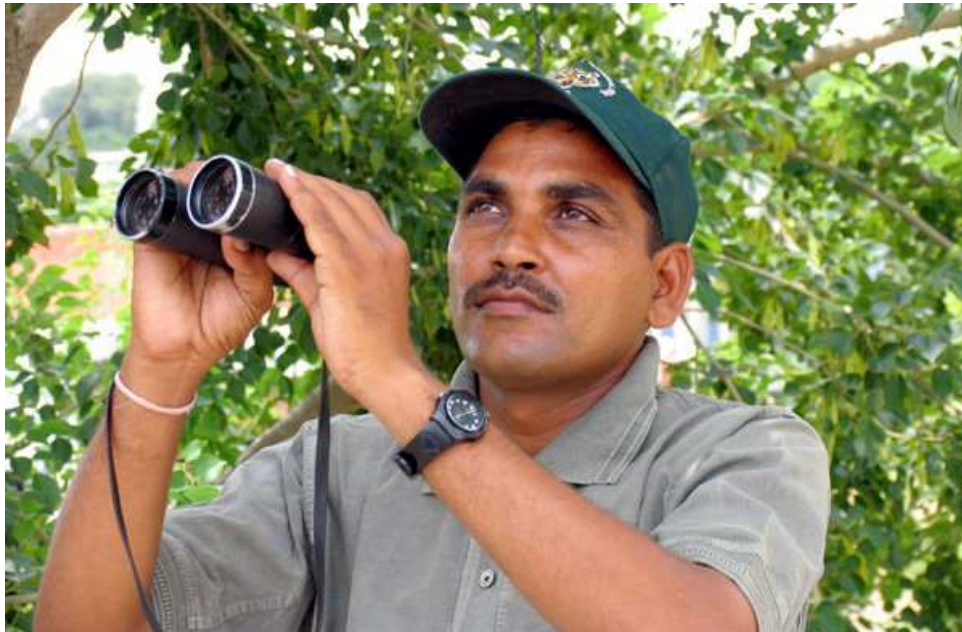
Vivek Bhargawa of Sawai Madhopur was never interested in forest and nature. He just tried his luck in the year 1999 when vacancies were announced by the Forest Department for naturalists and guides. He got selected clearing the test and has been a guide since then.

Ranthambhore National Park, constitutes to a small part of the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve but heres where majority of the tourism activity is concentrated, safari tours are conducted twice for 3 ½ hours each. Vivek says that this actually achieves the objective of efficient tracking of wild animals and especially tigers. First reports of tiger cubs being born or those of any injured animal are also usually given by tourists. He cites an example of the tigress

T-8 who was spotted with her already half a year old cubs in January 2011, a fact unknown till then, by tourists, and then obviously reported to the Forest department.

Around 3 and half years ago when there were about 50 posts vacant for guides, the forest department officials made a special efforts to ensure that youngsters, mainly tribals, living around villages on the periphery of the park were recruited. The aim was to give them a permanent source of income and an incentive to protect the forest. There are many such Vivek's today and their livelihoods are directly linked to the forest and the animals.

3. Touching all heights



(Pic: Hemraj Meena, Naturalist.)

A local from Bhuri Pahari, Mr. Hemraj Meena is now one of the most sought after guides by wildlife enthusiasts and wildlife filmmakers. His growth from a simple villager to an expert of sorts is nothing less than remarkable.

Mr. Hemraj Meena from Bhuri Pahari village, located near the corridor that connects Keladevi Wildlife Sanctuary and Ranthambhore National park, has been a guide for safari tourists since the last 16 years. At his little place the 'Tiger Home' resort, he hosts about a 100 plus guests per year, mostly photographers and wildlife filmmakers from India and abroad. His services are especially sought after by them as he knows the park by the back of his hand he is an experienced tracker too. Though the story of how he started out stands in stark contrast to what he has become.

Hemraj joined tourism in 1993 the then field director, Mr. B.L. Meena brought some serious transformation in him. He identified Hemraj as an able person who could be reformed and hence encouraged him to become a safari guide. In fact his younger sister, Surajbai Meena, too went on to become probably India's first ever lady guide!

Hemraj has travelled to other reserves with his photographer clients and he reckons that Ranthambhore National Park has one of the best management systems in place which is regulated with the best standards and regulations. He rues the fact though that tourism here in particular, and generally in India, is tiger-centric and other animals are ignored. For this reason he has a sort of a home stay facility in his towering three storey home in his native Bhuri Pahari village. Here he takes his guests in ravines and plains for a possible

glimpse of animals like foxes, jackals, wolves and hyenas which are otherwise not sighted in the main park.

While he fervently opposes the idea of a ban on tourism as it will weaken monitoring and inadvertently make poachers' lives easier, he does suggest to open up newer areas in the neighboring sanctuaries. He says that a natural corridor exists between the Ranthambhore national park and Keladevi WLS and should be developed.

The Forest Department must seriously do something to preserve it so that tigers and other animals could move out into the Keladevi WLS too, which currently harbors very little wildlife due to the presence of many villages and the resultant disturbance. "Make some waterholes there, spread awareness among people, speedup the compensation (of domestic animals) process and gradually translocate villages holistically in other non-wilderness areas". These surely are some valid points for authorities to review.

4.Travel Agents: Working to make your journey comfortable

There are just about 20 travel agents in and around Ranthambhore, earning variable incomes depending on the budgets of their clients. Their sole aim being to make a tourist's stay a memorable one.



(Pic: Shehnawaz Khan, Travel Agent)

We will not just loose the economy, which is much greener than mining or stone quarrying, we have to weigh the ups and downs of things. What alternates can be offered to such people, the debate should be looked into more objectively we are creating employment for Indians first locals or non locals are secondary question. Can we afford to let this happen? That is the big question.

Mr. Manohar Singh invites us into his office building, which also has a few rooms for tourists on its first floor, and speaks, affably about his younger days in Ranthambhore before we started discussions on the issue of a probable ban of tourism from India's critical tiger habitats. He is a travel agent by profession and arranges for accommodation of tourists in any of the 40-odd resorts lining the Ranthambhore road as per his client's budget.

A former army man, he was lured into Sawai Madhopur by his father who was working with the late Fateh Singh Rathore, the 'tiger man of India', when the Ranthambhore National Park (RNP) was declared as one of the 9 tiger reserves back in 1973 under India's then prime-minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi's famous 'Project Tiger' to reverse the flagging fortunes of the national animal.

"In Ranthambhore, a former game reserve of the royal family, the tiger was at its edge of existence", he recalls. "The Forest Department (FD) used to bait-feed existing tigers to ensure their survival as prey animals too were less than but today with all the protection and people's interest in the place has made Ranthambhore thrive its prey species and also tigers", continues Mr. Manohar.

Villages were moved out of the park in 1977-78 and rehabilitated elsewhere. "The tiger population gradually started recovering and Ranthambhore became a haven for animals and famous amongst tourists". He became a travel agent some years back and reckons that tourists in no way can cause harm to animals. He claims that up to 80 per cent of the hotel staff are 'locals' and sustain their families due to it. When asked to sum up the tourism issue he says, almost dejectedly, "If tourists go, the tiger will disappear too and with it will go our forests".



(Pic: Manohar Singh, Travel Agent)

5. Dastakar Ranthambhore

What started out as a small store with 15 working women has become a mammoth organization. With over 200 women working, earning Rs. 3000-5000 per month, Dastakar Ranthambhore is one of the top handicraft stores in the area. This project was initiated by Ranthambhore foundation with great support by Mr. Valmik Thapar.



(Pic: Kalli, a worker at Dastakar: An inspiring story)

Kalli is a satisfied and, more importantly, a self-reliant woman. Stitching mini-cushions, meticulously after stuffing them with the right amount of cotton at Ranthambhore's women cooperative handicrafts shop, 'Dastkar Ranthambhore'. She has been with Dastkar right from its inception in December 1992. "It started off as a craft centre with only 15 women back then who were all either employed as labourers during some construction activity or were doing nothing", says Dastkar Ranthambhore's manager Ms Jodha, who has been associated with it since the start. "We knew about Rajasthan's rich culture and art and encouraged women to take it up as a profession. We trained them free of cost and gradually the bandwagon grew after our products started being liked by tourists", says Ms. Jodha.

Located in Sherpur, one of the peripheral villages bounding the Ranthambhore National Park, Dastkar has already trained more than 300 women from the surrounding hamlets and has helped them to be economically stable. Another thing that makes village women comfortable to work with Dastkar is that it does not have any rigidity with respect to timings of work. Women may come at any hour and work for as long as they wish to as per their convenience. Dastkar follows the 'pay per piece made' policy and hence, depending on the number of items that a woman makes, she is paid anything between Rs.1000 up to Rs.5000. Some of them even tag their kids along when they report to work, such is the relaxed atmosphere of work. All its employees have their own individual bank accounts and their salaries are directly credited to these.



(Pic: Ms. U. Jodha. Manager Dastakar Ranthambhore)

They get provident fund as well as insurance.

The business mainly works because of the tourists that visit the Ranthambhore National Park. "I would say it is 80 per cent dependent on tourists. They visit the park, and then they visit our shop, get impressed by the range of our items and purchase them as souvenirs or simply as good authentic art-work", reveals Ms Jodha. With an impressive annual profit of Rs.1.26 crore, Dastkar has become self-sustainable now, a tremendous progress when compared to its initial days of struggle to remain afloat.

With the help of the money earned over the last 20 years, Kalli has managed to well educate her 4 kids, 3 sons and a daughter. While her 3 sons will be giving various entrances for higher courses, her daughter has started to accompany her to Dastkar to learn some handicraft. Dastkar women have even made a 'self help group' which may provide immediate cash to a member woman in times of distress to be returned later. Dastkar Ranthambhore itself provides 'soft loans' to their employees in times of need.

Kalli cheerfully stitches away another small purse, which will soon add some more money to her wallet. The feeling of being able to contribute to family expenses and being appreciated to do what they do is what really drives her on, like most others on the Dastkar campus.

Many such women are being employed by craft and art establishments and earn a respected and decent living out of these. If their art does not get a market which is in form of tourists they will be forced to go grazing peoples cattle illegally inside the park or cut wood which they would sell at menial rates to other villagers.

6. Kundal guides:



(Pic- Knowledge is wealth: Kundal Guides at the Park entrance.)

Twenty-three men from the traditionally cattle-grazers Gurjar community in the Kundal region of Zone-6 of the Ranthambhore National Park and another 10 from Banas (See Annexure 6) were turned into able tourist guides, under an initiative by the Forest Department. Now they talk about encouraging others to give up illegal grazing in the park and maintain inviolate space for the wild animals. Earning anything from Rs. 5000-10,000 (exclusive of tips) during the season, these guides have shown knowledge is not only restricted for the educated.

Laxman might not be very different from a typical Gurjar. Big built and possessing an even bigger moustache, he too was a cattle grazer, the traditional occupation of this community, till 5 years ago. He used to take his cattle, a dozen of them, daily inside the park for foraging. The then DCF, Mr.Shekhawat, ordered an immediate stop to this practice for obvious reasons. Laxman and other men of his village pleaded with Mr.Shekhawat about any alternative livelihood option. "We knew only one job till then", he told us, "and was ready to take up anything that the DCF *sahab* would have suggested then as we had to support our respective families". And from then on was started a magnificent transformation in their lives!

These men, including Laxman, were turned into tourist guides after a thorough training that they received from experts in various fields of natural history and in English language.

Laxman can now rattle off even scientific names of most common trees found in and around Ranthambhore. "Spotted deer, sambar, leopard, tiger, langur..." he goes on with the names of animals as well, notwithstanding the fact that he has never had any formal schooling at all.

This job pays him well too as he draws a monthly income ranging anywhere between Rs.5400 to Rs.12600 and even more, depending on the number of canters that are booked. 'Tips' received from tourists are an added perk.

Unlike other parts of the park, the Kundal region remains open for a longer part of the year and hence this has become their only and continuous source of income. Since he and his other Kundal guides' colleagues know that it is these forests that provide



(Pic: A mighty Gujjar)

them with their livelihood, they voluntarily take part in actively protecting it too. "No one is



(Pic- Once a shepherd, now a guide: Laxman)

allowed to graze their cattle inside or go on with any destructive activity inside the forest now, we completely prohibit it", he says. The Round Forester of Kundal, Mr.Mohan lal Garg confirms this. He also informs us that it is these 'guides' who immediately rise for help in case of emergencies like forest fires even after their office hours. "Three people among them are sent daily to monitor the resident tigers' movements and report their

observations", he continues. In his opinion, Kundal region's forests have blossomed because of these local villagers who are trained as guides' and understand every part of the area which they provide protection voluntarily.

As we prepare to leave the premise, Laxman spots a spotted owlet saying its good sign to see it...

7. Hotel owners

Dilip Meena belongs to one of the local tribes and was born in Ranthambhore. He now one of the many locals who runs and owns their own hotels.



(Pic- Standing Strong: Hammir Hotel)

The anti-tourism lobby highlights the 'fact' that most hotels are multi-chain big hotel companies that fail to give employment to the local population, except for menial jobs, it is not always so. Take the case of Dilip Meena who belongs to one of the local tribe and was born in Ranthambhore.

His father had set up 'The Hammir' in the year 1990 when there were only a handful resorts around. The business has mushroomed since then and his 30 plus rooms cater to many visitors throughout the year, even during the off-season. At present, the majority of hotels and resorts around the park have been set up by 'locals' and its benefits have reached people living around the park.

About locals being given only 'lower' jobs, he opines that they must be given thorough training, which according to him must not be thrust on hoteliers, or they may fail in their



(Pic- A local and hotel owner: Mr. Dilip Meena)

responsibilities. **He also adds that staff from other places, from 'outside', do not stay for long, it is hard and expensive to retain them and it is more economical to have locals employed at every level of running a property.**

However, he does add that it may be only for some super-specialty jobs for example '*Kerala Ayurvedic massage*' or to cook continental and other exotic food type or managers that experts from 'outside' may be needed. Even these things are rapidly being absorbed by 'locals' and they are fast replacing the 'outsiders', he adds with a smile that expresses surprise. For that matter, one of his 30-odd employees, all of whom are 'locals', a certain Ramkesh had started only as a cleaner at a measly salary of Rs.300 back in 1994. He then learnt various techniques of cooking all types of food while on job and is now a chef at the hotel drawing Rs.7000 from his employer!

Dilip also thinks that monitoring of wildlife movements is a very crucial job unknowingly done by tourists and cannot be overlooked.

8. Machali : Mighty tigress of tourism zone

With the entire ruckus about tourists disturbing tigers, 'Machali' is an example of a Tigress who is at ease with tourists and said to be the most photographed wild Tigress in the world... She may be an animal, but her well being too, depends on tourism.

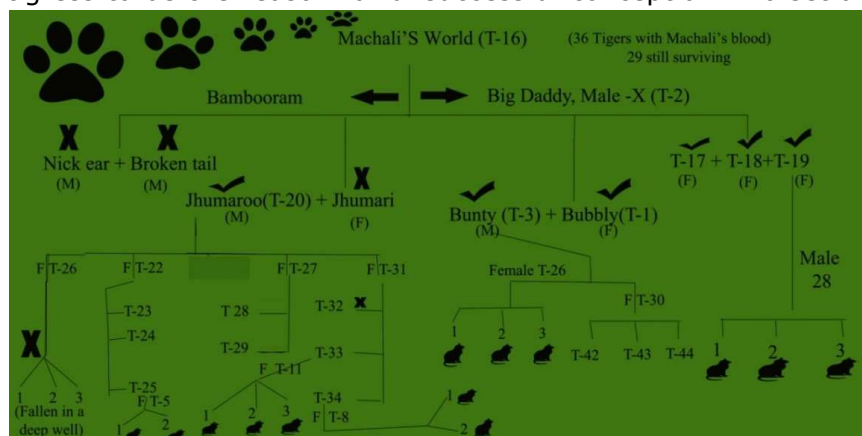


(Pic- Elegance personified: Machali)

There have been speculations about tigress T17 not being able to produce a litter in spite of attaining the right age. A few experts have blamed tourism pressure for the tigress not being able to conceive in spite of repeated mating; however, the other lobby suggests the radio collar installed on the tigress to be the reason for unsuccessful conception. To set an example Machalli (T16) lived in the lakes for all her life surrounded by many visitors and yet she managed to produce 4 litters successfully. 29 of the 36 Tigers from Machali's blood line are still surviving.

T-19, T-17's sibling (From the same litter) and who also resides in the tourism zone, has produced a

number of off springs. On contrary there are no such examples there of a radio collared tigress in Ranthambhore delivering cubs.



Pic: Machalli's blood line

9. Where will these hands work?

There are hundreds of local people associated with the handicraft industry within Sawai Madhopur area, a large percentage comprising of women. These people earn anything between Rs. 4000-5000 per month. There are close to 30 stores (Annexure 10) selling handicrafts in the area. There also are many more stores that are set up in hotels.



(Pic- Tribal Wild Women Craft: Owner, Mr. Dharamvir)

Dharamvir Ji, a resident of Sawai Madhopur, owns a popular handicraft emporium by the name of Tribal Wild Woman Craft. "All the workers employed are locals", he says. Tribal Wild Woman Craft employs around 60 odd people including 7-8 widows, some being the sole bread owners of their respective households. They easily earn 4000-5000 Rupees per month, spending a part of their day in *kadhai* work or making patchwork bedspreads. Apart from these women, a number of painters and weavers are also employed at this emporium.



(Pic- The hands that work: Women Working at Village Women Craft)

Even Thejpal Singh Ji agrees that tourism plays a major role in the sustainability of the handicraft industry. He along with Gurwindar Singh manage and own 'Village Women Craft' another popular handicraft store. They too, like Dharamvir Ji employ, 40-45 people at their emporium. They have another 60-75 people working for them from their homes. Village Craft and Village Women Craft are two of the 50 handicrafts stores situated around Ranthambhore. This number does not even include privately owned or rented handicraft and souvenir stores running inside most hotels.

Dharamvir Ji reckons that there are hundreds of people, within Sawai Madhopur, whose livelihood is associated with the handicraft industry, the main market being tourists.

10. Fabricating Life by building cars

There are 7-8 workshops of fabricators in Sawai Madhopur area. Customizing a jeep costs Rs. 8000 and a cantor costs around Rs. 1.1 Lakh. These vehicles need consistent repair work and replacement in every 3-4 years.



(Pic: A worker crouching before an unfinished canter)

The fabrication business for the locals of Sawai Madhopur is beyond building metal structures by cutting, bending and assembling. Mubarak Bhai and Wahid Bhai, own their individual fabrication stores in the same lane. Their stores are 2 of the 7-8 workshops present in that area.

Amongst the usual fabrication processes and works, a major chunk of their income is derived from customizing vehicles for park safaris in Ranthambhore National Park. What they receive are mere skeletons of Maruti and TATA vehicles. They put in hours of sweat and blood into making these canters and Gypsies tourist worthy, thus helping in making a visit to the Park a memorable experience.

Wahid Bhai has assembled around 15 canters and 21 Gypsies this year. Not to be left far behind, his competitor cum neighbor, Mubarak Bhai, has put together 20 Gypsies. Canters and Gypsies have an average life of 4 years, before being written off, thus there is a consistent inflow of vehicles that need to be fabricated or repaired. Customizing a gypsys for park use costs around Rs. 8000 whereas a canter costs 1 to 1.1 Lakh Rupees. Mubarak Bhai also sends customized Gypsy parts to Bandhavgarh National Park. They also fabricate Gypsies for Sariska National Park rides.

11. A Day in Light

Approximately 175 foreign tourists group go for village visits through the 'Day in Light' program, under the Overseas Adventure Travels organization; in every season from August to May.



(Pic: Multicultural Interaction- 'A Day in Light')

There is much more to see in Ranthambhore, other than Tigers in the National Park. One such example is the 'Day in Light' program, which enables foreign tourists to experience a day in the life of a normal villager, living in and around Ranthambhore.

Foreign tourists pay visits to the local school and interact with the teachers and students, both, sharing their respective thoughts and cultures with each other. The students, due to such constant interactions, have become highly receptive and confident.



(Pic- The village kind of life: Tourists, part of the OAT's 'A day in Light' Program)

The tourists also get an opportunity to visit the village and interact with the people there and observe their daily routines. The villagers offer them tea and other refreshments, while swapping life stories. The travel company pays them money in return to their hospitality. Says Manohar Singh "This interaction makes the villagers feel involved and as a part of the tourism industry".

This helps bridging the gaps between the thoughts of a villager and a tourist and strengthens this bond.

The tourists thus leave Ranthambhore, with memories that last more than a lifetime.

12. "Aao School Chale Hum" (Let's go to School)

2 schools have been adopted in Sawai Madhopur under the GCF of OAT. This program provides education to approx. 350-400 children and employment to 15-20 teachers, who earn around an average of 3000 Rupees per month. Most of the money from the GCF is used to improve the infrastructure of the school.



(Pic: Foreigners interacting with the children of Saini Aadarsh Vidyamandir, Ramsinghpura)

Sunil Saini is nothing less than confident while conversing with foreigners in fluent English. It is hard to believe that this 6-year-old was born to farmers who may have never seen the inside of a school-room. He is one of the lucky few, who have chosen to be given scholarships by foreign nationals who visit his school,

Saini Aadarsh Vidyamandir, Ramsinghpura. It is one of the 2 schools to have been adopted by a tourism agency, by the name of 'Overseas Adventure Tourism' (OAT). OAT donates around 10 USD per tourist to their Grand Circle Fund (GCF), which in turn adopts schools in remote and rural areas to contribute to educating underprivileged children.

This co-ed school is attended by 200 students from the Ramsinghpura area. Once, the school was nothing but a room with four walls. Now after receiving funds from OAT, the children have better infrastructure to obtain much-needed education- including better classrooms, solar lights, a computer and even sanitation facilities, which even the children's

families are deprived of. Tourists who visit the school, often donate stationary to the school, for the children to use.

Looking at them, they may not seem to be students from well off families, with their torn pants and button-less shirts; but their excitement to learn and their inquisitiveness is clearly reflected from their glowing faces. Who says you need a uniform to go to school and learn?

13.The money business



(Pic: Ram Swaroop, Accountant)

With the arrival of full force tourism in Ranthambhore National Park came a lot of establishments, including hotels, resorts, restaurants, banks etc. Accountantship thus emerged as a job opportunity for the local youth and around 25 people provide their services to various such facilities.

With the generation of income come the need for taxation, and the obvious need for accountants. That is when Ram Swaroop thought of doing Accountantship with Tally and hence becoming a qualified accountant himself. He accomplished his course in 2007 and has been freelancing as an accountant in a couple of hotels and other smaller establishments near the market place. He has to visit these resorts and other establishments thrice or at the most 4 times in a month and is paid on a monthly basis for his work. At 26 now, he can foresee a secure future for himself and his family.

In his knowledge there are at least a couple of dozen accountants around, probably even more! Around 5 training institutes impart education to budding accountants and ultimately these boys go on to get jobs in and around the national park, thus ultimately becoming a part of the local economy.

Tourism banning from tiger reserves of the country, he cannot understand its reason but what he does understand is that his income and many others will take a steep break. He predicts an estimated 70 per cent dip in his earnings. He may well have to return to agriculture in his village located on the periphery of the park, or migrate elsewhere.

14. Art Revival- Block Printing



(Pic: A 'dyeing' Art: Gopal Lal Nama)

The art of block printing was revived in and around Ranthambhore after it became a tourist hotspot. There are at least half a dozen artists who do this here, while many others have now gone to places elsewhere. Each earns an income of around 5 to 10 thousand rupees. If tourism is gone, they will ultimately return to labour.

56 year old Gopal Lal Nama goes on with his job of imprinting tiger figures on a piece of cloth using various colors outside, a handicrafts shop on the Ranthambhore road. He has been doing this since the last four decades. Though his art seems monotonous to a lay person, he enjoys doing it and knows the intricacies involved with the art with respect to patterns, colors and printing quality. His forefathers too were involved with this art but it was rapidly fading away among people of his generation, and hence many moved away from Ranthambhore to places elsewhere where there was a market for their art works. Since now tourists themselves throng this park to catch a glimpse of the tiger, a market has been established here itself! So he is reaping the benefits of staying put. Gopal manages to earn in the range of Rs.6000 to 7000 per month, as per his art's demand. He at presents supports his family of five, including three school and college going children. When asked about any alternative livelihood option that he could pursue, the reply was in the negative revealing that he will have to do manual labor. In the ever-growing list of disappearing arts this might be an addition too.

15. Trying to keep the Wheel Turning

Jairam Ji knows of only 3 families in his village of Shamota, who work on black pottery. Earning close to Rs. 90,000 a year hand with 10-12 family members in his house he tries keep this art alive and keep his family fed.



(Pic: Jairam, A potter from Shamota)

Jairam Ji sits over his pottery wheel. It's a fascinating sight to see him make beautiful pots and decorative pieces from shapeless moulds of clay. He later bakes his *kaccha* items in a special *batti* oven. Instead of the usual red, these pieces turn out black.

Jairam Ji lives in Shamota Village, 12 km from Ranthambhore. He and his family are one of the 4-5 families, who are trying to keep this dying art alive. Jairam Ji wholeheartedly encouraged his family, comprising of 10 members, to continue practicing this art.



At first the family used to make vessels and utensils for personal use and a few people in their village. But later people from outside his village sent in their requests, and later demands for decorative artwork started pouring in. Soon Jairam Ji was exporting his wares to Delhi, Jaipur, Mumbai and even Bangalore for exhibitions.

(Pic: Black Pottery)

Decorative tiles, animals, pots with wildlife motifs are in great demand.

Even though his art is now gaining popularity, Jairam Ji remains simple at heart. His annual profit per year comes to approximately Rs. 1 Lakh, which is enough to support himself and his family. Most of his sales occur during the tourist season.

Jairam ji really enjoys his work and the freedom of creativity that he is given. "It is definitely better than farming, because this way I can spend time with my family and help them continue this art" he says, while getting back to work, turning his pottery wheel once again.



(Pic: Black Pottery)

16. Tea served well



(Pic- Enjoying a Tea break: An assortment of people at a tea stall)

Around 40 chai-wallahs operate on the Ranthambhore roadsides and make decent business with guides, drivers and sometimes tourists stopping by for a cup.

Kaluram Saini is a straightforward person. Without even asking him about the effect of tourism, he reveals that it is the sole industry that provides him with his daily bread, his source of income. Born and brought up in Sawai Madhopur, he used to supply milk to forest officials till 14 years ago. For grazing his cattle, he used to take them inside the park premises, technically illegal under extant wildlife laws. After a suggestion put forth by an official, he decided to open a tea-stall on one side of the Ranthambhore road opposite the Divisional Forest Officer's office. His business is thriving and is mainly due to the numerous guides and drivers that throng his place just after the evening safari, before returning to their respective homes. His son now runs the show and serves piping hot tea to all his customers, as well as to three of his interviewers today! So, in effect, he has moved on from an ecologically draining to a more sustainable way of life. Now earning between Rs.4000 to 5000 a month, he can't even think of tourism being banned! It is what sustains him and his family. He tells me, "*Dhanda 100 per cent down ho jayega sahab*". He says that the Ranthambhore road, on which there is so much activity during the tourists' months, is deserted during the off season of July to September months! Just as I am about to leave, he almost pulls me closer to him and says that these people, the locals, do not realize that it is only tourism that can legally earn them some money. "*Sahab Sawai Madhopur ko kaun janta hai? Sab to yahan Ranthambhore ke liye aate hai*", he says.

Many such small scale enterprises work around the forest which give employment, livelihood and education to many families... this should not be ignored while arguing benefits to locals.

17. Computer professionals



(Pic: Technologically Advanced: Vishnu Kumar)

With the setting up of hotels and resorts and other allied businesses around the Ranthambhore National Park came a lot of computers. Thus a demand for computer professionals and training centers were created. There are 5-7 in Ranthambhore. Many people, living around the park, are getting employed as computer operators in hotels and other establishments.

Vishnu Kumar started his 'Indian Computer Education Centre' in 1993 when he began seeing the opportunity hidden behind the many computers that were rushing in to Sawai Madhopur, as a result of hotels and other enterprises that were being set up there, after Ranthambhore National Park became one of the most visited parks of the country. Many students living in villages around the park got an opportunity to learn something else and they happily grabbed it. Many have had their training received here and gone on to become computer experts and troubleshooters. Apart from students, forest guards are also given basic computer training so that in this digitized world, they too are able to carry out certain basic tasks that may be assigned to them. Recently 60 new forest personnel who were inducted as guards were provided with it.

Vishnu has around a dozen hardware and software experts employed with him who attend calls with respect to computer problems in various establishments. He also provides new and assembled PCs, laptop, various peripherals etc. according to people's requirements. His business is primarily dependent on the tourism industry, though not entirely so. Banks too

require his services, but as he puts it, so many banks have sprung up around Sawai Madhopur largely because of the booming tourism economy. Then there are travel agents who do online booking, they all require computers! Now there are about 15 computer training institutes around this district to train more people. Hence these computer professionals too have gained from tourism and are now a part of the mainstream.

18. Fading colours of a canvas



(Pic: A face amongst many: An artist of The Ranthambhore School of Art)

There are around 200 artists in Sawai Madhopur area who earn a living by painting and selling their artwork in various handicraft stores. Since its formation in 1989, The Ranthambhore School of Art is responsible for training and establishing 250-300 artists, who earn at least 5000-6000 Rupees a month by selling their paintings. The Ranthambhore Foundation has supported the art school a great deal, with special efforts of Mr. Valmik Thapar.

Rajendra Singh, Mahendra Sharma, K.P. Singh, M.D. Parasar and Mahesh Singh are a few names of the top selling Artists in Sawai Madhopur area. A thing common between all of them is that they all started out at the Ranthambhore School of Art (RSA). Narayan Singh Ji is the President of the organisation and a noted artist himself. He says 80% of the people trained at the art school



(Pic: The artistically inclined, Paint artist at the RSA.)

are local people- living in and around Sawai Madhopur.

The training is provided free of cost to these potential artists. "We also conduct free summer training programs for children", says Narayan Ji. After artists complete their training, they are either absorbed by the handicraft industry or start freelancing as wildlife painters. Many artists have shifted their base to other places, such as Bandhavgarh, Jaipur and even Delhi.



(Pic: The Ranthambhore School of Art)

A painting made by a student of the Art school can fetch anything between a few hundreds to a couple of thousand of Rupees; 80% of this amount is directly given to the artist and 20% goes to the art school. According to Narayan Ji, an artist in Sawai Madhopur area can earn anything between 5000- 30,000 Rupees per month; depending on the quality of their paintings. Most of the paintings are bought by tourists visiting Ranthambhore, especially foreigners. Many of these paintings are exhibited abroad as well. The school is supported by the WWF India (World Wide Fund for Nature) and many other organisations.

The Art school gives budding artists a chance to grow and nurture artistic qualities; and helps them to earn a living, doing what they do best.

19. Hawkers

There are 23 hawkers in Ranthambhore National Park, and about 3-4 in kundal area. Earning 10-15 thousand rupees per month (during the tourist season), they sell caps, jackets and other tit-bits to tourists while they wait their turn to enter the park.



There are 23 hawkers in Ranthambhore National Park, and about 3-4 in kundal they earn 10-15 thousand rupees per month from the sales of various knick knack to tourists in the tourism months. They have a very disciplined system of setting up a roaster within themselves and divide in to two groups one in the morning and one in the evening. The roaster is mutually decide so that all get equal opportunities to sell not just this they have a meeting in the month where sales are discussed.

These are the same villagers living around the park and acknowledge the presence of forest and tigers for giving them livelihood.

Hawkers are a common sight selling various things to tourists outside the park.



(Pic: Hawkers outside the National Park)

25. The story of a transformation



(Pic: An amazing story of transformation: Jugraj Mogiya)

The tourism industry has given opportunity to many people, especially poachers to live an honest life again. Jugraj Mogiya is one example.

This story is that of a poacher who had killed 3 tigers in Rajasthan's Ranthambhore National Park and sold its parts, but since the last couple of years has been working in the Forest Department (FD) office as a gardener. Jugraj Mogiya is facing trial in high court for the above mentioned crime. In 2006, he surrendered his illegal weapon to late Shri Fateh Singh Rathore and his retired friend and ex-DGP of Rajasthan, late Mr. Shantanu Singh. How exactly was this transformation possible?

After a few months in jail, Jugraj got bail. When Jugraj came back to his village Halonda, some villagers of Uliyana kidnapped him and made him a bonded labor, so that they could compensate their loan. Village Uliyana is infamous for their violent ways. In the early 80's villagers from Uliyana had attacked Mr. Fateh and broken his limbs. They have fired on policemen too and provided shelter to poachers like Devi Singh in the past.

Jugraj had taken a loan of Rs. 25,000 for his daughter's marriage from them. The villagers made new loan papers and included that Jugraj had taken a Rs. 67,000 loan instead! They

had actually included his 'interest' component too in the sum. Now, Jugraj was asked to pay almost Rs. 2000 a month as interest and return the rest of the inflated money as well. The then DFO of Ranthambhore got news that Jugraj was in Uliyana again and could kill a tiger any time to return the loan. Once again the forest officials contacted Tiger Watch, a local NGO started by the late Mr. Fateh Singh Rathore, to rescue Jugraj from Uliyana. He was thus rescued by the Tiger Watch team, but a visibly scared Jugraj expressed fear for his family's lives and said that he had no choice but to settle the loan.

Fateh Singh Rathore called up the villager who had lent the money to Jugraj and sent the Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Mr. Sudarshan Sharma to settle his case. Fatehji decided to give Rs. 25,000 from Tiger Watch to the money lender and Mr. Sudarshan offered a new job to Jugraj. A German tourist **who has been a regular visitor of Ranthambhore, Mr. Dieter Gutman later compensated this money to Tiger Watch after being moved by this amazing story of transformation.**

A secure job and uniform gave Jugraj some much-needed confidence, peace of mind and dignity. To date Jugraj is working with the Forest Department. If the community, NGO, authorities and in this case a tourist too, do small deeds like this they could perhaps change the face of conservation.

27. Cool Cook

There are more than 60 hotels (See Annexure9) and restaurants in Ranthambhore, each on an average require at least 2 cooks per kitchen amongst other kitchen staff. It's a well paying job and a satisfying one as well.



(Pic: Cooking up magic- Khem Singh 'Babloo' Bisht)

Khem Singh Bisht is a tall and soft-spoken young man from Uttarakhand. He has been heading the kitchen staff of the medium budget resort 'The Ranthambhore Bagh' on the Ranthambhore road since 2002. Known as 'Babloo' to his owners and employees, he cooks some scrumptious food and is not averse to cooking various food preparations, to the delight of most of the hotel's foreign tourists. Prior to 2002, he worked at a hotel in Uttarakhand's Corbett Tiger Reserve.

Apparently, kitchen staff from this northern Indian state as well as from some others is preferred here due to their culinary prowess as also due to most locals' decline to cook non-vegetarian food. Obviously, they are harder to retain as well. From the three months of off season when the park remains closed for visitors, Khem Singh goes to his native place and practices agriculture for a couple of months. Hence it is not surprising to know that many have gone back to their home states. In most hotels now, managers have only their chief chef as an 'outsider', and have got the local staff trained gradually into the food making. Hence a good proportion of staff now comprises of the local population, from villages

located around the Ranthambhore National Park periphery. Babloo says that there was a time in Ranthambhore when almost all hotels' kitchen staff comprised of people from other Indian states. It has reduced gradually over the years and come to about 50 per cent of what it used to be.

What we learn from this example is that it may not be possible to give direct employment to local people always and straight away. Gradually, when local people learn and pick up things and then ultimately take over. **It makes appropriate business sense and secure future and new employment opportunities for the locals.**

28. The power of local management

There are many managers appointed in the hotel business that are locals. Most of these people are employed at mid range hotels but still earn quite well, between Rs. 15,000-18,000 per month.



(Pic- Local Management: Satendra Singh. Manager, Hammir Hotel.)

Satendra Singh Ji hails from Jolanda Village, near Ranthambhore. After completing his Masters Degree in History, he went on to work in the hotel industry in Jaipur. It has been 12 year now since he's been in Ranthambhore, as the Manager of Hammir, a popular tourist hotel. Satendra Singh Ji understands the intricacies of the trade and has a successful hotel running under his management, with 20 people working at various positions at the hotel. Managers like him earn Rs.15,000 to 20,000 a month. Hammir hotel receives all kinds of guests from students, to families to even foreign guests. The high inflow of tourists, has inspired many local people like Satendra Singh Ji to be involved in the tourism industry.

29. Small shops, many people.

The Ranthambhore roadside is dotted with small pan-beedi stores, some of them hidden away in small nooks and crannies. There are approximately 25 in number and the owners earn Rs. 3,000 to 4,000 per month.



(Pic: Relaxed on the job- Giriraj Prasad Verma)

60 year old Giriraj Prasad Verma lives in the town of Sawai Madhopur. Since the last 20 years, he has been running a small *pan-bidi* shop near the Divisional Forest Officer's (DFO) office on the Ranthambhore road which has helped him upgrading his and his family's life.

When enquired about the nature of his customers he says that it is mostly the safari drivers and guides along with taxi drivers and occasionally tourists that do maximum purchase from his shop. Thus, he admits that it is primarily tourism-driven and earns him an income that may go up to Rs.4000 during the tourist season. He fears at even the prospect of a ban being placed on tourism from Ranthambhore's core areas. "That will be bad", he says simply, "when the booking office was shifted out from the DFO's office, I felt a severe pinch in business. Now when I have recovered from that, people want to stop tourists completely", he rues. He signs off sarcastically "God save this country and Ranthambhore and its forests!"

30. Where the food comes from

There are 3-5 main suppliers of vegetables in Ranthambhore and many more in the 'mandi' area. These vendors supply vegetables to almost all hotels in Ranthambhore, on an average earning at least Rs, 5000 per month.



(Pic: Purushottam Das, a vegetable vendor)

Sitting on a platform amidst his fresh and ripe looking vegetables inside a small alley of vegetable vendors in the Sawai Madhopur town market is 48 years old Purushottam Das. He started to deal in vegetables and their supplies since his father handed over the reins of his business to his son Purushottam, he has expanded his business and now provides 4 hotels with vegetables on a daily basis as per their demand and has employed a couple of people as his helpers. "Sir, hundreds of people and their families are connected with tourism, how can they even think of putting a ban on it?" asks Purushottam.

"There are flower sellers, fruit *wallahs*, meat suppliers; one can imagine the volume of people connected with tourism!" he thunders. "So many farmers sell their produce and earn their income, they all have improved their standard of living as a result", he says. He reveals that up to 60 per cent of his sale is due to supply in hotels and restaurants and he earns about 1000 rupees daily in peak tourist season due to the vegetable sales and so do other vegetable vendors who have their network in different hotels. "Where will we go after the ban, if it gets imposed?"

31. Ram Singh: Not your average attendant

Hotels have some or the other person responsible for running multiple errands. There will be many such people in Ranthambhore. Such attendants/Staff managers earn Rs. 4,000-4,5000 and another Rs.5,000 as tips.



(Pic: Ram Singh, once a dish cleaner; now head of staff)

Ranthambhore Bagh is another popular wildlife lodge in Ranthambhore. Originally from Bhadlav village, Ram Singh has been working at the lodge for quite some time. He joined as a dishwasher and then progressed to working as a bellboy and later an attendant. He is now in charge of running multiple errands and also manages the staff. He is an example of progress in true sense. His work is greatly appreciated by the hotel owners and the tourists who stay at the lodge. In fact, he also has a Facebook page in to commend his work. He earns Rs. 4,500 per month as salary and easily earns another Rs. 5000 as tips. Ramsingh likes what he does. And irrespective of what other people think, he doesn't feel his job is 'menial'.

32. The relocation theory

Tiger being wiped out of Sariska in 2005 due to poaching was a national shame. This tiger reserve of Rajasthan was officially declared to have lost all its tigers, mainly due to poaching. This prompted the Prime Minister Office (PMO) to give more powers to 'Project Tiger', the national tiger-conservation program, and it was reborn as the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau in 2006.

Soon Panna Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh too lost all its tigers. NTCA's chairperson Ms.Sunita Narain, in her Tiger Task Force (TTF) report of 2006 recommended the relocation of tigers from other reserves to these locally-extinct tiger's habitats on the promise of fulfillment of certain conditions.

Hence, a high profile plan was drawn to shift some of the tigers from Rajasthan's Ranthambhore



(Pic- Relocate to Repopulate, Relocating tigers from Ranthambhore to Sariska)

National Park to Sariska. Between 2008 and 2011, six tigers have been trans-located to Sariska. A point to be noted here is that five of the six trans-located tigers were chosen from the 'tourism zone' of Ranthambhore national park. It demonstrates that the five tigers of tourism zone were thriving here and spotted by the team when the time came to shift them although it is a topic of debate as to what scientific methodology was used to choose the right tiger with different gene pool.

If tourism, and in such a regulated manner as practiced by the authorities at Ranthambhore National Park, has been singled out as the prime reason for 'disturbance' in critical tiger habitats, how was such a thriving population of India's national animal maintained in this area?

33. A fruitful business

Sitting on the roadside of the Ranthambhore road, one can find about 12-15 guava sellers at one time. The earning is on a daily basis from Rs.100 on a normal day and Rs. 350 during the tourist months.



(Pic: The luscious fruit in plenty- A guava seller on the Ranthambhore Road)

Squatting on one side of the famous Ranthambhore road in Rajasthan's Sawai Madhopur district is a 55 year old wary woman who refuses to reveal her name. She, by her own admission, makes a decent profit of Rs.100 a day on an average, going up to Rs. 350 even during the peak tourist season. They cultivate guavas in their small farmland and while her husband sells some part of the produce in the Sawai Madhopur town marketplace, she selects the best ones to attract tourists who come to visit the park and do not mind biting into the delicious fruit, at premium rate! This way they earn well for about 3 month of the guava harvest season, typically September to December, and cultivate other crops in other months. Thus she has been able to send all her 3 children to a better school in the vicinity so that they could secure a future for themselves, better than her own.

All this could change, and rapidly, if the Supreme Court bans tourism from all core areas of the 40-odd tiger reserves of this country, also declared as 'critical tiger habitats', on account of the PIL filed by an NGO. The glee in her eyes is unmistakable as she collects Rs.50 from a *gori mem*, foreseeing the payment of her children's school fees in advance on time, totally unaware of what may lie in store for her and many small fruit vendors and farmers like her in the near future.

34. Bagh Hotel- Cattle Compensation program

Cattle compensation programs are offered by many popular hotels, to villagers who have lost their cattle due to wild predators. This is done to discourage any feeling of resentment from the villagers towards wildlife.

'The Ranthambhore Bagh' is one of the 30-odd hotels that most people opt to stay in during their visit to the park. It is run and managed by an 'outsider' in Mr. Aditya Singh. A program that he supports in association with a local NGO is far more beneficial to the 'locals' of the area and is a crucial part of conservation of this magnificent forest.



(Pic: A snapshot of 'The Ranthambhore Bagh')

There are at least 40 villages that immediately surround the park, apart from three that are located inside it. Approximately two million and fifty thousand people live within a radius of 10km from the park's boundary. The wealth of wildlife in the park along with reasonably efficient protection has meant that it is close to its carrying capacity. Naturally, this region is a place which faces human-wildlife conflict as wild animals try to move out of an already crowded space. Typically what happens is that when a domestic animal, or in worst cases a human, is killed by a predator, be it tiger or leopard, there is 'retaliation killing'. This is either achieved by poisoning or shooting the carnivore. In order to avoid this, the affected villager must be immediately compensated by the government on the basis of reasonable proof.

But the present machinery fails to do it in this urgency. An elaborate procedure means that the affected parties have to wait for many days for a forensic report to arrive authenticating the incident. By this time, it is possible that another killing might take place and fuel anger

amongst villagers. The attitude of either 'human or animal' sets in and proves detrimental to wildlife.

The 'Cattle compensation' program, initiated by the NGO Tiger Watch and funded by Mr. Aditya, gives monetary compensation within 48 hours of an established livestock killed by a carnivore. Rs.5000 is given as relief for a cattle kill while Rs.500 is given in case of goats/sheep.



(Pic: The Cattle Compensation Program, by The Ranthambhore Bagh)

There is no requirement of a medical or forensic report, a written statement by the area's forest ranger works enough. If at all there is any doubt, evidence is looked in by the Tiger Watch team and compensation is given on the basis of simple findings like carnivore teeth-puncture marks on the dead cattle and other such things. Mr. Aditya has made a commitment of up to Rs.15000 per month towards this program since its initiation in April 2011; already 10 separate livestock predation cases have been compensated for, including an incident when 38 sheep were killed by a leopard on a single night when it got inside their enclosure.

An 'outsider' and few others like him have become a 'local' help.

35. Life through a lens.

Local people in Ranthambhore are growing from strength to strength. From normal villagers their lives have been transformed due to tourism. Many of them now pursue careers in painting, handicrafts and in this case wildlife film-making.



(Pic: Learning the ropes- Vijay, a future wildlife film-maker)

Vijay has been an artist all his life, almost. He was enticed by wildlife since a very young age reading books on natural history that his father used to sell to tourists on the Ranthambhore road. Born in Sawai Madhopur, he was fascinated by wildlife painting and decided to learn the art. He joined the now famous 'Ranthambhore School of Art' as a 12 year old and has reached great heights as a painter, mainly doing charcoal paintings. His paintings have been exhibited in Denmark and other states and countries. He had once even presented one of his more acclaimed paintings to Rahul Gandhi on his visit to Ranthambhore.

A photographer by hobby, Vijay's first camera was gifted to him by a Danish tourist after she was highly impressed by his paintings. He now pursues it seriously and has graduated to be an assistant of a film-maker, Mr. Nalla and has been working with him since the past 10 months. Vijay helps Mr. Nalla with certain basic tasks like fixing the movie camera, helping in the tracking of animals etc. He is basically learning the tricks of the trade of film-making. He says that all of this had been possible due to tourism. He is also of the opinion that banning tourism is really not the way to go about it as a lot of people are connected with it and derive benefits. He admittedly and evidently has been one of the beneficiaries.

"Poaching activities may surely increase if tourists' watchful eyes disappear, given the current management system in place in our country and poor enforcement of wildlife laws", he says.

Such film makers/ photographers coming from various parts of the world help to document the secret lives of animals which fascinate and attract tourists. In turn

the tourist feels the need to conserve the animals, if the tourists do not come to see the animals in their wild habitat how will they be able to contribute or even feel the need to save them?

36. "Pugmarks" and tiger tourism

Pugmarks is one of many tour operators who organize nature based tours in Ranthambhore. Tourism does not only affect lives of the locals of Ranthambhore, but also the people who visit.

We are all too aware of the environmental problems facing the planet today. We have read a lot about most of them and casually discuss these issues over coffee and sometimes even in workshops. However, most of us are still unable to understand the fine linkages between various actors on the huge theatre called earth. Little did we know that there would be great famines when we exported frog legs and even today many don't understand that by losing tigers, we would actually be looking at severe water crisis!!!



Humanity would itself be at a risk– if we were to lose our tigers, as it is they who maintain the ecological balance of the forest.

At Pugmarks, we have been complementing the education system by helping children explore our wilderness. We have been using the "Tiger Forests" like Ranthambhore to sensitize the children about the need to protect these forests. We have used a very simple principle of giving them an exposure to wilderness that generates a passion...

We will conserve what we love;
We love what we understand;
We understand what we are taught...

MANY of these kids will soon be decision makers. We are sure; they will have the tiger in the back of their minds – every time they have to balance development and wilderness.

More so even when they have to decide about the paper stationery required in their workplace or conservation of electricity, water and other resources. Incidentally, these children have already started “educating” their parents about practicing conservation at home. We have been trying to create eco-sensitive citizen – by using Tiger, the most effective model.

We believe that many of these children will also be making careers in conservation. Interestingly some of these kids have already grown up to take up wildlife biology/ conservation sciences/ etc at some of the premier institutions abroad and in India (like WCS / WII etc.)

Words of : Mr. Anirudh Chaoji, Pugmarks, Pune.

37. A cut above the rest.

There are around 100 people involved in the tailoring profession in Sawai Madhopur area. Many of these tailors do not have a consistent income, due to irregularities in orders or customers. An independent tailor earns under Rs. 2500 per month, whereas tailors associated with the handicrafts industry can earn about Rs. 5500 to 9000.



(Pic: Engrossed in work, Sageer Khan- A tailor at 'Dhok')

Sageer Khan spends his day working, bent over his sewing machine. Sewing and tailoring since 1966, Sageer Khan, originally from Sherpur, is one of the 100 tailors in Sawai Madhopur area. His father was an employee of a local factory in his time and had little to do with this field. Sageer Khan, learnt the craft on his own, nearly 51 years ago. He used to own his own tailoring store, but due to loans and credit issues, he preferred to give up his shop and join the handicrafts business. A man who once stitched shirts, pants and other such clothing items, is now employed at 'Dhok', a handicraft store in Ranthambhore; sewing colourful bedspreads, cushion covers and quilts for a living. These artefacts are in great demand by tourists who visit the store and wish to take back with them a piece of 'Rangelo Rajasthan'.

An average tailor, associated with a handicrafts store such as Sageer Khan earns 3,000 to 3,500 Rupees a month. An independent tailor earns a lot less. Of the 23 people in his family, he is the only tailor by profession.

38. Even a dustbin can change lives

Interacting with tourists does not aid in exchange of cultural view but also brings about a change in lifestyle. The OAT's (Overseas Adventure Travellers) program 'A day in light' brought about the setting up of 2 dustbins and employment related to garbage disposal in the village of Ramsinghpura.

For the villagers living in Ramsinghpura, cleanliness used to mean collecting garbage from their homes and dumping it somewhere else. This led to hygiene related issues including mosquito breeding and illness.



(Pic: Foreigners visiting a village as a part of the OAT Program, 'A Day in Light)

At first, the villagers were against using dustbins in the village, when they were suggested to do so as dustbins and garbage management require a lot of responsibility villagers. But on being persuaded by the OAT (Overseas Adventure Travelers), the villagers agreed to the construction of 2 dustbins in the village, funded by the OAT.



(Pic: Clean-up in charge- Ranjeet)

e construction of dustbins has not only helped in maintaining cleanliness in the village, but also has helped in employing not less than 5 people on monthly or daily wage basis, for the purpose of sanitation management. One these people is Ranjeet Kalochea, who earns 3000 Rupees per month, for sweeping the village, two times a day. "Since I stay with children from morning 10 am to 2pm, I have observed improving hygiene and cleanliness amongst them", says Nimla Sharma, an Aanganvaadi Officer since the past 16 years.



(Pic: Spreading awareness about hygiene- Ms. Nimla Sharma)

The villagers too, are very inspired by the changes brought by the presence of dustbins and are demanding for the construction of 2 more dustbins in the village.

39. Not just employment, it's local Empowerment.

It is not an easy job to maintain the high standards of the hotel Oberoi Vanya Vilas, which is why there are over 150 staff employed, out of which 70 are locals (See Annexure7). The locals are engaged in jobs like gardening, security, maintenance, kitchen help and so on. Ankit, Jitendra and Rahish- all locals, work at the positions of Front Office Assistant, Engineering Supervisor and Engineering Technician respectively. The staffs employed are divided into three categories of skilled, semiskilled, unskilled and are paid accordingly. These wages are well above the minimum wages set by the government.

Minimum Wages			
Govt.	Unskilled	Semiskilled	Skilled
Min. Wages	3510	3770	4030
Hotel	Unskilled	Semiskilled	Skilled
Gross	5897	7109	7336
Net	4871	6052	6248

The hotel also employs local people for maintenance work during the off seasons.

Local art is also promoted such as painting, pottery, crafts and even music. The artists are paid around Rs.1500 per visit.

They feel that the involvement is very important and some jobs would not be possible to carry out without their input and contribution.

40. Igniting young Minds

The Oberoi Vanyavilas believes in supporting the forest department in all ways that they can. One of the ways they do so is by benefiting the families of park rangers, guides and drivers. Many of the guides and drivers are not quite educated themselves or financially well off to pay for the education of their children. The hotel tries to support them by encouraging the children to study. One way of doing this is by the Oberoi scholarship Award. The award is given to 3 children every year. It not only supports them, but also motivates many more children to study.

The scholarship is applicable for the children of permanent staff or executive cadre in the Dept. of Forest. Ranthambhore National Park, Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan, India.

The amount awarded is Rs.75,000. The amount is divided as follows:

Best (Highest) Performer: Rs. 40,000

Second Best Performer: Rs. 20,000

Third Best Performer: Rs. 15,000

The amount awarded is not given in cash, but is deposited in the institute the child pursues their study in.



(Pic: Happy faces- Students supported by the Oberoi Vanyavilas)

41. For the people who work for the forest

The Oberoi Vanyavilas hotel does its best to contribute to uplift the lives of the locals and play their part in conservation. They agree that they have gained recognition and acclaim because of the national park and they try to do their best to contribute in any which way they can. The hotel is and has been involved with a number of wildlife conservation activities and has worked along with the forest department for the recognition and appreciation of forest guards, rangers and guides. The job of a forest guard or a ranger includes taking a lot of risks, which can sometimes be life threatening. A lot of the guards and rangers are the sole earning members of their families. Their job comes with a lot of stress as well.



(Pic: Taking Risks- Forest Guards)

The Oberoi Vanyavilas hotel, with the help of one of their guests, has covered about 220 guards under a personal accident insurance. A total coverage of Rs. 4,00,000 is given which covers total and partially disability, loss of limb(s), inability to work due to an accident.



(Pic: Forest Guards, being insured under the Oberoi's Forest Guard Accident Insurance initiative)

After being covered under this insurance program, the people covered can continue doing this work without fear or second thoughts. Apart from this they have made 10 water holes in the national park & make it sure that it is filled so that there is enough of water available for the animals during summer, this manual supplement of water also provide employment to locals, adding to their employment. During winters they provide forest guards with blankets and supplies for keeping them warm & making tea in the wild.

42. Rebuilding lives

Oberoi Vanyavilas as a hotel are conscious about their role towards the community and hence have been working closely with the many organisations for the social cause. The hotel participates in the efforts of 'Tiger Watch' an NGO working for protection & conservation of wildlife in Ranthambhore Tiger reserve. It works for the rehabilitation of the traditional Hunting community 'Moghiyas' by finding alternate means of livelihood for them & educating their children.



(Pic:Project Sophisticated Stones Outreach)

They help in creating awareness for the project " Sophisticated Stones Outreach" because of which one of the schools in a nearby place called bodal has been getting benefit and support in form of sweaters, shoes & uniform for the past few years through this organisation. The main Aim behind this is to provide these children with the tools they need to get an education as this is the door out of poverty.

They are associated with Taare Zameen Pe from last two years. This organisation works for intellectually and physically challenged children. The hotel extends both emotional & financial support to these children. On various occasion Oberoi's team spends some quality time with the Children to brighten their life in a special way. They also support the organisation financially with various equipment required for children's training. Recently in month of march the donated 21,000 rupees to this organisation.

The Oberoi Vanvilas is a stellar example of sustainable tourism- benefitting both the environment and the local people whilst growing strength to strength and maintaining their status as one of the top hotels not only in Ranthambhore, but in India as well.

43. Deepak General Stores

There are many general stores upon which hoteliers depend on to buy their basic rations from. Deepak general store is one of the main supply stores.



(Pic: Deepak Kumar Jain, owner of Deepak General Stores)

Deepak kumar Jain is an important person in the dynamics of Ranthambhore's economy. His 'Deepak General Stores' located near Sawai Madhopur railway station on a very busy market road happens to supply all grocery items to many hotel and resort that dot Ranthambhore. The scenes are chaotic outside his store as daily supplies are loaded into a mini-van to be dropped at various resorts as per their respective demand. He may have been a toddler when his father, a Sawai Madhopur born fellow, started this business in order to supply certain everyday items to a mere handful of resorts that existed then. As the store's reputation grew due to its efficient services, the newer hotels too put their trust in him and this has resulted in an increase in business volume over the years.

He employs 8 people in his business undertaking. There are other general stores too around and they too supply grocery items to some other hotels as well as to small and big restaurants on the Ranthambhore road. By his own admission, as much as 80 per cent of his annual income is generated due to hotels present due to tourism. "Our business will totally shrink if tourism and tourists go and we will have only the small local market", says Deepak. He also reckons that as much as 50 per cent of Sawai Madhopur town's people are connected in some way or the other to

the tourism industry. Can these figures be ignored? Shouldn't there be a thorough fact-finding before any hasty non-informed decision is arrived at?

Many such daily supply shops depend on the tourism influx for their survival. If not reviewed correctly these business will shut with forced unemployment's.

44. The 'C' business

Sometimes there are unprecedented business opportunities that arise out of nowhere. Many people, including researchers and conservationists, do not see beyond direct employment generated by tourism and hence fail to correctly estimate the volume of local participation in this economy.

Dressed smartly in his formal attire with brown shades on, a middle aged man by the name of Mr. Avdhesh confidently struts out of his motorbike to spare some time for a short interview. "Yes, it is me who submits the C-form to the SP's office", he announces. And that is precisely what he does every day in Ranthambhore to earn his living, as amazing and simple as it may sound!

The C-form is a requirement of the Indian government for foreign nationals who come to visit the country. It has to be submitted within 48 hours of their arrival into the nation. More than that and you may fall in trouble with the law-enforcer and come under suspicion. "It is a risky and daily work", says Avdhesh. It has been 7 years since he started to help out hotels with submitting their international guests' C-forms. He provides his 'pick-up and submit' facility to 15 hotels on the Ranthambhore road who pay him on a monthly basis. He also happens to be a contractor and earns his income in the off-season (July-September) thus. "Someone from Pa



(Pic: 'Form'al Duties- Mr. Avdhesh)

Afghanistan and Bangladesh has to even inform the local police before their arrival itself", he reveals. Depending on the distance of a particular resort from the

Superintendent of Police's (SP) office, which may be anything within the range of 5 to 15 km, he receives Rs. 500 to Rs.2000 as his remuneration. He traverses this distance by his motorbike and finishes his work in only a couple of hours at max. He thus makes a profit of Rs.12000 to 15000 a month depending on the volume of international visitors that Ranthambhore National Park may receive.

A study by Dr. Krithi Karanth says that only 760 people⁸ are directly employed by the tourism industry. While this figure may not be far away from reality, what she misses out is the massive number of people that are indirectly employed by it. That what would have given a truer picture of local employment opportunities that tourism generates around protected areas and how it may still be the best bet to make the local population an important and concerned stakeholder in the protection of their forests. Avdesh is just the tip of the iceberg.

45. The Pugmark hotel- CSR

Many hotels and resorts that are situated around the Ranthambhore National Park may be deriving great profits from tourists, but at the same time also supply stable jobs to locals and also contribute towards the society and especially towards small welfare projects in areas around the Ranthambhore landscape. Some may do it privately while others do it as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility program. This does not include all the taxes that they pay to the government.



(Pic: Little heroes- The Yash Rehabilitation Centre for Handicapped Children)

One of the many hotels and resorts that have mushroomed in and around the Ranthambhore National Park is 'The Pugmark'. No doubt it is a luxury hotel, although its brochure proclaims it to be a 'wildlife resort', and may be earning from the influx of tourists that come to visit the park, it also believes in giving back to the society in whatever measure possible.

The Yash Rehabilitation Centre for Handicapped Children (YRCHC), a registered non-profit voluntary association, was created solely with the purpose of helping the cause of specially-able and children with debilitating mental disorders like autism so that they could develop into 'normal', independent and confident citizens. They provide special education, therapies and training classes with individualized educational plan for each child.

About 50 children take their education through this organization, rather than being confined within their homes, as would have happened with them otherwise as is the case in most villages and small towns of India. As part of this resort's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), they provide support with respect to funds in the running of this centre. YRCHC is entirely funded by grants from tourists and has been functioning efficiently since 2006. As Mr. Samir, the resort's owner puts it; approximately 20 per cent of their contribution to YRCHC comes from direct donations by tourists that stay in their premises. The other portion comes from the profit obtained from running his hotel business and his friends' contributions.

A centre for these special children in a small town where people living around never even had any idea about their special needs was possible mainly due to educated and responsible people and the grants that came in due to the tourist influx. Who will think about this indirect benefit from tourism and how it is helping those children who would have been chained on cots or put in a dark room by their uneducated parents. The kids may have to soon think of alternatives or go back to their ill-treated lives.

46. FATEH PUBLIC SCHOOL: "Second to None"

More than 400 students study at Fateh Public School. It is the first C.B.S.E. school to be set up in Sawai Madhopur district. The Prakratik Society and tourist funds have played a major role in its existence.

Fateh public school was established in 2001 and is managed by **PRAKRATIK SOCIETY**. The society was founded in 1994 and runs many other prestigious institutions. The emblem of the "**Tiger**" and the motto inscribed on it "**Second To None**" appropriately characterizes our institute.

"The aim of the school is to create in every child the capacity to identify, understand, utilize and conserve the resources available on planet Earth"-
Founder Mr. Fateh Singh Rathore.



(Pic: The school building, Fateh Public School)

The land for the school construction was donated by Mr. Fateh Singh but the money for construction of school building has been raised by tourists visiting Ranthambhore National Park. Mr. Michael Jackson initially had donated 25,000 pounds for FPS.

Apart from this many other tourists has done charity as per their wish for the school. With the help of donations, they have added one more building recently to their school and now the school run classes till 11th standard. There are total 415 students receiving high quality education in this school. 30% of these are from villages around the park.



(Pic: Foreign Volunteers at F.P.S)

These village children are provided a scholarship. A girl belonging to rural families and who is the only daughter is provided with free education if one of the parents opts for sterilization from Ranthambhore Sevika Hospital.. This process is leading the student to learn the importance of preserving Ranthambhore as a natural resource, which will continue to sustain their elementary needs forever and somewhere there is a TOURIST behind this.

47. COOLIE

There are around 9-10 coolies at Sawai Madhopur Station, each earning close to Rs. 500 a day during the tourist season. It is redundant to mention how a coolie's life depends on tourists.

Lounging outside the Sawai Madhopur station are 5-6 coolies waiting to free a traveller from their excessive baggage, albeit for a short distance. A coolie on an average earns upto Rs. 200 per day. A coolie's profession is tough and earning money in the off season is even tougher. During the tourist season they earn much more, thanks to the tips given to them by foreign tourists who pity on their state of life. The local people rarely hire coolies. Though money is inconsistent, the few months of tourism provide them with a quantum of solace.



(Pic: Hard workers: Coolies at Ranthambhore National Park)

48. RANTHAMBHORE SEVIKA:

Set up by the efforts of the Prakratik Society and donations by tourists, the Ranthambhore Sevika Hospital is the largest medical facility in Sawai Madhopur. With about 60 beds and 10 permanent doctors, it is a boon for the locals of the area.

The Ranthambhore Sevika is a hospital in Sherpur area, set up by the efforts of an organisation by the name of 'Prakratik Society' a society founded by Dr. G.S. Rathore. It is a well equipped hospital having 60 beds and 10 permanent doctors along with many nursing staff and attendants. It provides quality healthcare to the patients and houses many medical facilities under one roof such as: Orthopedics, Gynecology, Ophthalmology and so on.

Initially the institution was very small and offered limited facilities. But due to the donations made by tourists, the hospital expanded to its current size and state.

The hospital receives almost 90,000 to 1 Lakh patients a year. A number of healthcare aids and waivers are provided to patients who cannot afford treatment fee.



(Pic: Ranthambhore Sevika Hospital)

49. A 'Blooming' career

There are just about 50-60 gardens in Ranthambhore requiring 1 to 4 gardeners for maintenance. This number can vary depending on the size of the garden. An average gardeners earns anything above Rs.6, 500 a month during the tourist season.

Murari is employed at Dev Vilas Hotel and is charge of looking after the garden and maintaining it. According to him there are around 50-60 gardens in Ranthambhore hotels, and maintaining an average sized garden takes about 3-4 gardeners.

Only few of the gardeners hired are permanently hired, the rest of them are hired seasonally or according to the requirement. During the off seasons, lesser numbers of people are employed.



(Pic: Trimming and Pruning- Murari, a gardener at Dev Vilas)

An average gardener earns Rs. 7000-8000 per month or even more depending upon the type of hotel. Murari is content with his job, which is the reason why he has been in this profession since the past 18 years.

50. Securing their futures

There are more than 60 hotels in Ranthambhore, each employing at least 2-4 security guards per hotel. (See Annexure 7) These guards earn anything above Rs. 5,000 per month and work in shifts

Ramu hails from Rawal and works at Dev Vilas hotel. He is happy with his job as a Security guard at the main gate. There are many organizations in Ranthambhore that provide hotels with security personnel. Initially, outsiders were preferred for the job, but now there organizations hire and train locals for such positions.



(Pic: Always Alert- Ramu, a security guard at Dev Vilas)

Depending upon the size of the hotel there maybe 2 to 5 or even more appointed as security guards. Ramu gets to spend quality time with his family as well, as he works in shifts. Earning more than Rs. 5,000 per month, he is content with his life.

51. Excess "Cess"

The MoEF (Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India) recently suggested levying a flat 30% cess of the total revenue of hotels lying in a range of 5kms from the boundary of the protected area as 'Local Conservation Cess' [Protected Area Update; Volume 17 No.4, Aug 2011 (No.92)].



This is a template of the typical taxes hotels in Ranthambhore would be paying government. **This does NOT include all the various other charges and fees that hotels pay government.** It is very difficult to calculate the gross dues paid by hotels to government (some of these tax figures have increased). With the proposed 'cess' the total percentage of revenue paid to government will be well over 50%.

TAX STRUCTURE on HOTEL OPERATIONS IN RANTHAMBHORE: A Sample

Typically a hospitality operation in Ranthambhore would pay the Government the following taxes based on a simulated revenue model:

<u>HEAD</u>	<u>TAX %</u>	<u>Type of TAX</u>
Accommodation	10	Luxury Tax
Food	5	VAT
Transfers	4.12	Service Tax
Bar Sale	20	VAT
Restaurant Sale	14	VAT
Shop Sale	14	VAT
Safari/Excursion Sale	4.12	Service Tax
Massage Sale	10.3	Service Tax

If we were to take a revenue model under the heads given above, earnings in taxation from this simulated operation for Government would be as follows:

<u>HEAD</u>	<u>REVENUE</u>	<u>Tax to GOVT.</u>
Accommodation	10000	1000
Food	3000	150
Transfers	1000	41.2
Bar Sale	2000	400
Restaurant Sale	1000	140
Shop Sale	1000	140
Safari/Excursion Sale	1000	41.2
Massage Sale	1000	1.2

- That is nearly 10% tax on everyday operations. This everyday tax is besides the 40% Income Tax on all profits.

- Additionally there are various license fees and duties that are paid to government year on year as well as taxes too numerous to mention on the purchase of daily items from local markets.
- If the total revenue of a given operation for a year is for example Rs. 3 Crores, then the "everyday" taxation from that unit to government is Rs. 30 lakhs.
- It is up to government how much of the net tax receipt is ploughed back as a cess into the local community and in Ranthambhore's case, into the National Park.
- The cost of running operations including salaries (to local employees) and other expenditure is nearly 60% of the total revenue. So for a Rs 3 crore turnover besides the Rs 30 lakhs as everyday tax the hotel will pay a further Rs 50 lakhs as Income tax, assuming that operational expenditure is 60% of turnover.

There are many examples of hotels that run CSR, Cattle compensation programs and provide financial aid to many organizations supporting conservation. Additional taxation will leave them with a very low profit and thus would restrict them to grow financially. Following are the tax particulars of **Khem Vilas hotel**.

Particulars\Years	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
	1877629.89	3513024.07	4085121.82	4227751.35
Particulars\Years	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Other duties and taxes incl. directors taxes	404680.00	755128.00	1026167.00	1334965.00
Grand Total per year	2282309.89	4268152.07	5111288.82	5562716.35

Over Rs.55 Lakhs were collected on behalf of the Government as Luxury Tax, Vat and Income Tax just from Khem Vilas (from a 22 room hotel) in the year 2010 to 2011

52. Green Protectors

Overgrazing can be a threat. It leads to rapid degradation of green spaces, and recovering from overgrazing can take quite some time. Thus human intervention is required to keep this activity in check.

Standing next to each other are two hillocks. They are identical in shape and size. The only difference is that one is barren while the other is carpeted with lush greenery. Once upon a time, this hill too was as barren as the first one.

A few years ago, the management of the hotel Khem Vilas pitched in to save one hillock from overgrazing. This movement was first initiated by the Ranthambhore foundation. The rate of plant growth because of this activity was slow and inconsistent. They fenced the area and also appointed a local as a security guard for the area. Within a short time of 15-16 years the hillock has recovered from all the overgrazing and has recovered back to a green patch.



53. The Special People

It is not uncommon to find mentally challenged children of underprivileged people, being abandoned by their family. Due to negligence, many such children die at a young age. A school run by Adarsh Mano Vikas Sansthan, Sawai Madhopur gives such children a chance at life. They are solely supported by a few hotels and tourists.

Hanuman was found roaming aimlessly on a hillock after his parents abandoned him. Babloo was rescued from his parents when they were found abandoning him on a train. Muskaan was tied up by her parents in her house.

Apart from sharing such a bleak and unhappy family background, there is another thing common between these children. All of them are mentally challenged.

These children are 3 of the 26 children who live at the Ranthambhore Special School for Mentally Retarded and Multiple Disable Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Blindness low vision Hearing impairment, Loco Motor Disable Children free residential School and vocational training centre, run by Mr. RK Meena.

The school is majorly supported by Dev Vilas (all year) and Amen-E-Khas (seasonally). Along with these hotels, tourists who visit the facility donate money and other necessities (medicines, teaching aids etc.). Along with Mr. Meena, there are teachers, cleaners, a cook and other helpers at the school. The



facility does its best to provide education, medical treatment and physiotherapy to the children.

Without the support of tourists, it would be hard to run this institute and these children would have to go back to life of neglect and abuse.

The work of Mr. Meena and all the people associated with the school: Mr. Roop Singh, Mr. Meetha Lal Meena, Ms. Shravani Devi, Ms. Ramkanya and Mr. Krishna, should be applauded and supported.

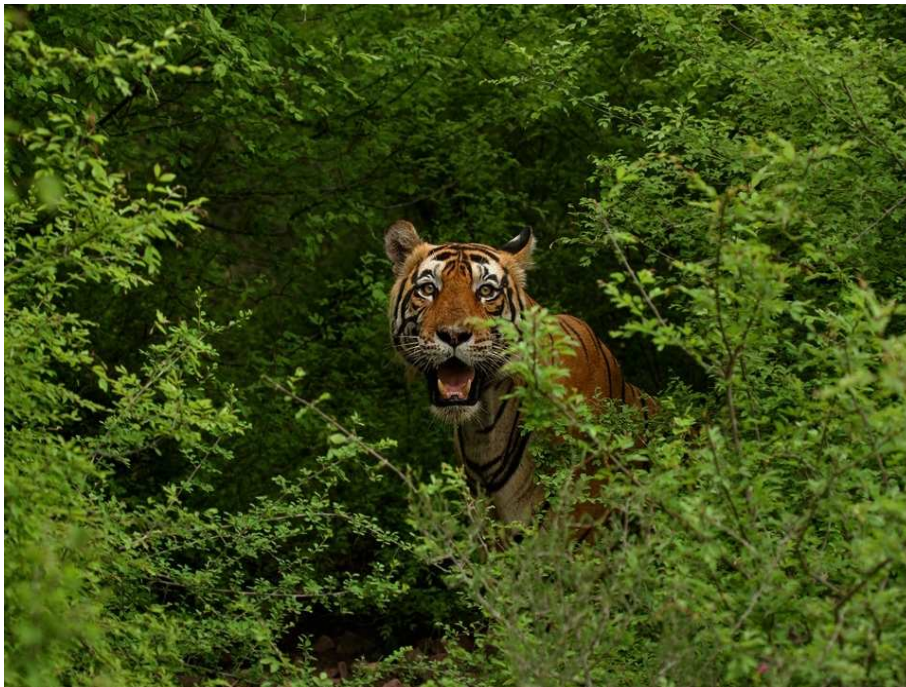
54. "The ultimate guide book" and forest guard welfare fund

In Ranthambhore some money was raised for the welfare of the forest staff. The purpose of the fund pool was to allocate immediate monetary support for the needy forest staff in times of crisis. The money was raised from the sale of about 5,500-6,000 copies of "*The Ultimate Ranthambhore Guide*", a book published and authored by Ms. Sanjana Kapoor priced at Rs 175 each. The ultimate guide book is one of the best published guide book in for any national park in India. Not just it is colorful and artistically done but also it is also helpful to a new traveler of Ranthambhore.

Using the data base of this guide book Ms. Kapoor created a interpretation center situated at the main gate of the park. Not just the tourists of the national park who started visiting this beautiful interpretation centre but also the local villagers and pilgrims visiting the Ganesh temple started taking immense interest in the awareness activity.

Bulk of the fund was, however, raised from handling charges levied on tourism activities and Safari trips in the park. Fund of almost 25 lakh was collected over a period of one year.

Unfortunately the money was allegedly diverted for "non-welfare activities" like construction of anicuts, ponds, bore-wells etc without any tender, the intended beneficiaries of the fund have been left high and dry. The families of at least 10 deceased staff during the last two years could not be paid money for the funeral while the ailing staff lacks the funds for treatment. It is sheer mismanagement in the forest department.



55. Earn and Return

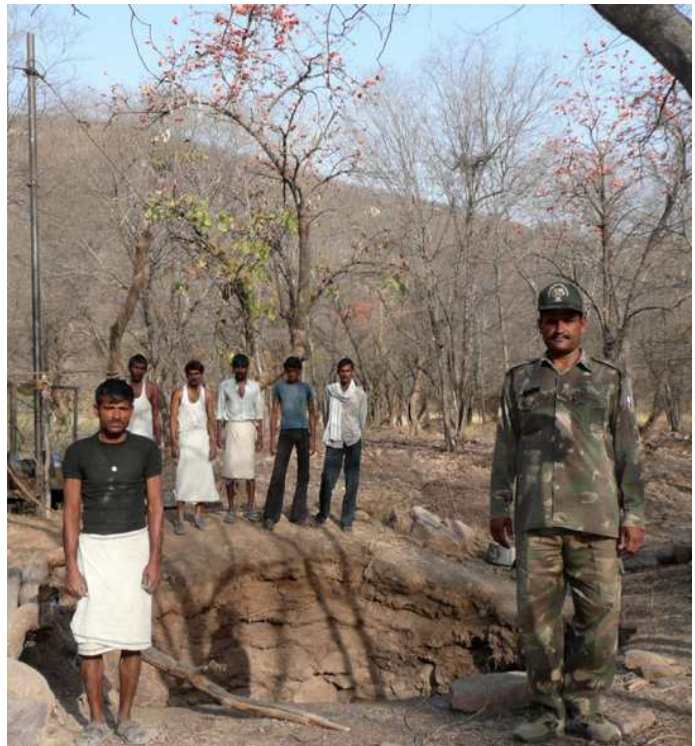
Water is a concern in the dry months of the year. There are many tiger areas which need artificial water holes. One such area is the Indalaki Dang which is 90 sq km nearly 30% on the area of the national park. This plateau, along with its neighboring areas, has the potential to accommodate between 8 and 10 tigers and that most of the cubs and sub adult tigers of Lahpur valley, Sakri valley and Thumka valley could establish their territories in Indala, provided there is enough water sources in the area.

In order to improve the habitat in areas like the indalaki dang and Jail Kho and give tigers a fighting chance to survive in this harsh and unforgiving landscape some hotels around Ranthambhore have come forward to lend a helping hand.

Mr Aditya Singh of RanthambhoreBagh has stepped forward and constructed 3 well and water holes and repaired an old reservoir in the Indala plateau converting it into an important tiger habitat.

Another example is Hotel Sher Bagh which has funded the construction of a well and through in Jail Kho. A part of Khandar forest range . Hotel SherBagh has also donated a Canter to the forest department for patrolling the park.

Thus setting a good example that, hotels that directly depend on the tiger for their business can also help give tigers a fighting chance to survive.



The Jail kho well

56. Ranthambhore foundation dairy Initiative

In the early 1990's cattle grazing inside the park was not only increasing but the graziers were also becoming militant with many conflicts between them and the park authorities. It was during this time that as Field Director of the Ranthambhore Foundation Dr Goverdhan Rathore initiated a dairy development project. At the time there was no activity at the local Milk Union in Sawai Madhopur built by NDDB and operated by RCDF. The activities were shut down and only an administrative office existed. One new route was created along the Shyampura side and 17 new milk cooperatives were started along with the revival of the Khandar Route. The NGO pumped in nearly 25 Lakh rupees to support the milk union in subsidies for transport, providing additional manpower support and equipment. At the time some hotels like the Sawai Madhopur Lodge also started buying milk from the Union in an effort to support this activity. Even today the biogas and artificial insemination program are supported by tourist money funded by a Tour Company in the UK called Audley Travels.



57. Vehicles for Monitoring and Vigilance of the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve

Running any park has required not just man power but also enough vehicles to move the people around the park for monitoring and anti-poaching. Ranthambhore has always been fortunate to receive enough support from many NGO's like Ranthambhore Foundation, Tiger Watch and hotels like Vanya Vilas, Sher Bagh, etc which has actively contributed canters, gypsy's and bikes for the activity of guards and officials in and around the park. Tiger conservationist Mr Valmik Thapar alone has helped in raising about 50-60 vehicles for the forest department PAN India from the visitors and lovers of Ranthambhore alone.



58. Nature education to the kids and locals through NGOs and local hoteliers

Since the past 25 years Ranthambhore foundation has been actively involved in Nature and wildlife awareness among locals especially targeting the younger generation of kids. To date thousands of kids from the vicinity have been taken inside the park to sensitize them towards the tiger's plight and saving the forest. Another NGO Sanctuary's Kids for Tigers has been actively going around the schools of the area and educating kids on tiger and forest. The kids for tigers gets support from local hotel like the Ranthambhore Bagh for all its logistics. About 10 thousand kids are associated with the Ranthambhore Foundation and almost the same number of kids are associated with the Kids for Tigers. All these kids were given free permission to visit the park, however today due to the controlled tourism there are restricted number of kids who travel inside the park but the program is still active and many kids still travel inside the park each year.



59. The camel ride

Tourism season in Ranthambhore spews opportunity for camel cart owners to arrange rides for visitors atop the desert animal. At least half a dozen such operators make good income from tourists. Additionally, there are other people who do hair trimming of camels and apply mehendi designs on them.

Akbar Hussain, all of 25, is a well-established camel cart owner already. He didn't bother to get any formal schooling, which is unfortunate, but that was primarily due to his family's economic condition then. His ancestors too dealt in camels and made some earnings, just enough to feed the family, using the animal as a beast of burden. But around his growing up years, the tourism bubble burst in Ranthambhore and the national park became a tourist hotspot for 'tiger sightings'. Since the last 10 years, his camel is being exclusively used for rides only.

The business model works something like this. His phone number is with every hotel owner around. Whenever a tourist expresses his or her opinion to ride on the 'desert animal' to their host, they in turn inform Akbar, or any other camel cart operator. There are 6 such camel cart operators in Ranthambhore, all from the peripheral village Sherpur. Camels have to be maintained well too, getting their hairs trimmed periodically and carving elaborate designs with *kali mehndi* and ribbons amongst other things. There are 3 such camel barbers and they make some good money. "It will shut off our business totally sir! We will have no option but to go for labour", he responded when asked about the repercussion of a possible ban on tourism. "Please do something about it sir!" he exclaimed. One can only do so much...



VI) References:

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VII) ANNEXURES:

<i>Sr. No</i>	<i>PARTICULARS</i>
1.	<u>Annexure 1</u> Gypsy list for the year of 2011-12
2.	<u>Annexure 2</u> Petrol canter List for the year of 2011-12
3.	<u>Annexure 3</u> Diesel Canter list for the year of 2011-12
4.	<u>Annexure 4</u> Tourism Management Guidelines: Ranthambhore Forest Department.
5.	<u>Annexure 5</u> Ranthambhore national Park nature Guide list
6.	<u>Annexure 6</u> List of EDC and Kundal guides
7.	<u>Annexure 7</u> List of Local employees in Hotel Oberoi
8.	<u>Annexure 8</u> List of Direct beneficiaries
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10.	<u>Annexure 10</u> List of Hotels in Ranthambhore
11.	<u>Annexure 11</u> List of most preferred hotels by tourists
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13.	<u>Annexure 13</u> Estimated number of people whose livelihoods directly depend on tourism

