

# NATURE'S NARRATIVE

Monthly newsletter of Greener Things

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## ABOUT US

*Nature's Narrative* is a literary step towards fulfilling our goal of spreading environmental awareness! An inter-artistic platform which portrays how we humans embrace and protect nature in our own native innovative way through art forms and protest movements! Let's say its nature's narration through humans!!

*Greener Things* is an initiative driven by the common world concern of making this earth a better inhabitable place for all of us but approaches it in an interdisciplinary and innovative way to showcase how every activity in this 21st century either harms our earth or heals it in its minuscule possible way!

# ENVIRO-SNIPPETS

*Enviro-Snippets is a segment in our newsletter where we bring to you daily happenings related to nature from around the nation.*

## Indian Wetlands Update

1) According to a recent 'Living Planet' report, India has lost nearly a third of its wetlands due to urbanization, agricultural proliferation, and large pollution in the last four decades. It is reported that the amphibians and fishes have declined by 84 percent in last four decades which makes it the "sixth mass extinction in history". It can increase the water temperature to unprecedented levels.

To Know more about these snippets, [click here](#).

## Indian Transport Sector Update

1) Indian Railways is set to become "net Zero carbon emitter" by 2030, it is one of the biggest railway networks on earth. The growth in the railway network would therefore curb the pollution levels. The Indian government is deliberating on greening the railway lines with a mission to electrify the whole network in the next half-decade. Electrification will put a stop to the diesel engine and the pollution ensuing therefrom. This would replace fossil fuels with renewable energy sources like solar energy, wind energy, etc. A source estimates that this would eliminate emissions of 7.5 million tons of carbon dioxide each year.

2) The new Delhi-Mumbai expressway will have India's first-ever animal overpasses. These will be on lines of the "animal bridges" of European nations. Wildlife crossings are a practice in habitat conservation allowing connections or connections between habitats, combating habitat fragmentation. They were started as an infrastructural solution to ensure safe passages for wild animals in Europe in the 1950s. These structures may be underpass tunnel, the overpass bridges, or canopy bridges.

To Know more about these snippets, [click here](#).

# Indian Ecosystem Update

1) The construction of some high-rise buildings in the Ballari district of Karnataka has led to abandonment of this area by the Great Indian Bustards (GIB). Ballari is only breeding grounds for GIB in Peninsular India and the largest breeding ground of GIB is in Rajasthan. They are on the verge of extinction in India. They have not been seen for a long time and experts believe that they may have abandoned the region due to disturbances created by construction and plantation work in the area.

2) An invasive weed called Lantana has trapped around 269 protected areas in eighteen states in India. A recent sampling effort counted that around 44 percent of Indian forests are affected by Lantana. Lantana Camara is a species woody shrub of American origin which could degrade the biodiversity of the region. India has little knowledge about Lantana where it might have introduced as hedge plants more than two centuries back.

To know more about these snippets, [click here](#).

# Indian National Park Update

1) The Assam government has approved to expand the Kaziranga National Park by 3053 hectares. This would make the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve to grow to 1085.53 sq km. Currently, the core area of the park is 430 sq. km. It would consolidate the wildlife areas to provide better wildlife conservation and would also lead to the reduction in human-wildlife negative interactions.

2) A global team of researchers has evaluated the Indian Sundarbans ecosystem to be endangered driven by historical clearing of mangroves and diminishing fish populations. The analysis uses the Red List of Ecosystems (RLE) framework developed by the IUCN. It is analogous to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

To know more about these snippets, [click here](#).

# Indian Enviro-Relations Update

1) The UN Biodiversity Summit held on 30 September 2020 under the theme of

“Urgent Action on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development.” The meeting takes place on the margins of the opening of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly. During the summit Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar said “Since time immemorial, India has a culture of not just conserving and protecting nature, but living in harmony with it.” India aims to restore 26 million hectares of degraded and deforested land and achieve land-degradation neutrality by 2030. In the last decade only tree cover enhanced by 24.56% in last decade.

2) On September 24, 2020, the Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change represented India at the Ministerial Roundtable Dialogue on Biodiversity that was held virtually. The dialogue was hosted by China. The theme of the dialogue was, “Beyond 2020: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth.” The dialogue was held a week ahead of the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity to exchange views on biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

3) On 21st September (World Peace Day) the ENO (Environment Online) Global Tree Planting day was observed. ENO India, and ACT NOW conducted World’s Largest and Longest environment online event “Peace Is Green”. The 24 hours long symposium that lasted from 21st September (12:00 hrs IST) to 22nd September (12:00 hrs IST) brought together the stakeholders of environment conservation from over 100 countries across the world.

To know more about these snippets, [click here](#).

***Interesting Trivia - Manipat, a town in Chhattisgarh, being home to a large Tibetan Population, also known as the Shimla of Chhattisgarh, it is home to only Buddha Temple of Chhattisgarh.***

## Indian Renewable Energy Update

1) CSIR-CMERI has developed the World’s Largest Solar Tree, which is installed at CSIR-CMERI Residential Colony, Durgapur. The Solar Tree has been designed to ensure maximum exposure of each Solar PV Panel to Sunlight and also creation of the least amount of shadow area beneath. Solar powered e-Suvidha Kiosks may also be connected to the Solar Trees for real-time access to the vast majority of agricultural database as well as to the e-NAM i.e.



National Agricultural Marketplace for instant and real-time access to a unified online market.

2) While India has been pushing for hydropower development, a latest study in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh on forest land diverted for hydropower projects has revealed that construction activities for hydropower are threatening biodiversity, impacting indigenous people and fragmenting critical wildlife habitats. The researchers revealed a poor state of compensatory afforestation carried out in Himachal Pradesh, with some of the plots, where compensatory afforestation had been apparently carried out, with no saplings.

To know more about these snippets, [click here](#).

***Interesting Trivia - Chhattisgarh is home to India's own Niagara: Horse shoe pattern water fall at Chitrakote is the largest water fall of India***

## Indian Enviro-Administrative Update

1) Collector of Nilgiris district, J. Innocent Divya is making headlines for stellar administrative decisions made to safeguard the environment in the ecologically sensitive district. The fragile ecosystem of Ooty and the pressure the Nilgiris district faces from increasing tourism made Divya realise the need for decisions safeguarding the environment. She began her crusade for environment protection with Unnadha Udhagai or Sublime Udhagai (Ooty) programme that won the administration the Green Award for the year 2018 from the Tamil Nadu government.

To know more about these snippets, [click here](#).



# National Biodiversity Update

- 1) The grey slender loris, which spends most of its time in canopies, is found across peninsular India and parts of Sri Lanka. Bengaluru comes in the northern end of the range, and before it became the country's third most populous city, it was also home to a significant number of lorises. The species has somehow clung to life in Bengaluru's remnant green spaces, even as the city is getting concretised at a frenzied pace.
- 2) A new species of underground-dwelling ant, Vaibhav's Protanilla (Protanillaflamma) has been described from Goa. The species is very small, measuring just 2.5 mm in length, yellow in colour, and is completely blind. The genus Protanilla is a rare group of ants, of which only 12 species are known worldwide. This discovery from Goa is the 13th species.
- 3) A Woolly flying squirrel (a species that has believed to be extinct for decades) has recently been spotted in Uttarakhand's Gangotri National Park. Woolly flying squirrel, which is scientifically known as Eupetauruscinereus, is believed to be disappeared from the subcontinent except for some of its traces in Kashmir. Woolly flying squirrel uses its furry claws as a parachute to fly. It is special and unique because of its large size and dentition.

To know more about these snippets, [click here](#).

*Interesting Trivia - The Silent Valley National Park in Kerala, which forms part of Western Ghats, is one among the last tracts of virgin tropical evergreen forest in India.*

## GREENOGRAPHY

*Greenography is a segment in our newsletter where we feature Photographs submitted by you. Nature is bountiful with great scenarios. We, at Greener Things relish nature and its eternal beauty. we look for pictures showcasing nature's beauty as well as the ill-impacts that human activities have had on nature.*

## PHOTOGRAPH BY

*Shail Palan*



## ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPH

This photograph is of a stream in Bhuj, West Gujarat. It shows the lack of awareness and carelessness of human being harm the environment in many ways.

By the photographer - We must be part of the solution not the pollution.

*Interesting Trivia - Nature Photography Day is an event created and promoted by the North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA) in order to promote the enjoyment of nature photography, and to explain how images have been used to advance the cause of conservation and protect plants, wildlife. It is celebrated on June 15th.*



# SUSTAINABLE MENSTRUATION

*A piece penned by Angelina Dash. She is a third year law undergraduate from GNLU, Gandhinagar. She is the Managing Editor of The Greener Things Blog and has keen interest in environment sustainability & conservation.*

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While sustainability as a term is mostly used in connection with sources of fuel like solar energy, or people waxing lyrical about the virtues of recycling, a topic that lags behind in this conversation is the concept of sustainable menstruation. At present, the most common menstrual product in India is the sanitary napkin, which even most non-menstruating people may recognise from advertisements on TV. Similarly, another commonly used menstrual product is the tampon. However, convenient as they may be, they ultimately take a toll on the environment, as they are single-use products made of plastic, including the outer packaging.

People who menstruate have traditionally used rags and animal hide during their periods, a practise that still continues in many villages in India, and across the world. But these have been criticised for being unhygienic and causing anaemia and pelvic, vaginal and urinary tract infections, etc. The first commercially available pads arrived in the late nineteenth century, and these were lauded for being “hygienic” and “economical”.

Today, in most cities, such sanitary products are of great convenience and benefit to people who do not have time to wash pads due to

packed schedules, long hours at work, or who prefer disposable, single-use menstrual products since those are all they have ever used. However, over time, these products can end up costing a lot financially.

Yet, it is the environment that must bear the higher cost. A single sanitary napkin can take 700 years to decompose, and this has adverse impacts on the environment, like water pollution and the death of aquatic animals as a result of the leaching of toxins in plastic into the water in oceans and other water bodies.

Besides, these products can be harmful for humans as well, as several studies, including by the WHO, have found the presence of artificial fragrances, bleach and carcinogenic toxins in sanitary products. Therefore, it is important to consider switching from disposable sanitary products to more sustainable products which can be reused.

## **How Sustainable Menstruation can be practiced?**

Recent years have brought forth several innovations like menstrual cups, reusable cloth pads and biodegradable sanitary pads. Menstrual cups are rubber or silicone cups which are inserted into the vagina. They gained popularity only recently, and have many benefits,

including being economical (since they are reusable), protecting against infections, etc. Many brands carry menstrual cups in their range, like Sirona, DivaCup and Gaaia. However, they can take some getting used to, and may make a few people squeamish. In such a scenario, people can also turn to reusable cloth pads. Unlike the rags used earlier, these come with leakproof and waterproof layers which are free from plastic. These can be used exactly in the same manner as regular sanitary pads. These are produced by companies like Eco Femme, which also runs a Pad for Pad programme, which conducts educational sessions and free cloth pad distribution programme for girls in government schools and rural areas. While using menstrual cups and reusable pads, though, cleaning up can be cumbersome and difficult for some. Such people can use biodegradable pads, like those brought out by Pee Safe. Such biodegradable pads often decompose within six months, and therefore are not a burden on the environment.

In addition to the above suggestions, it is essential to start having more conversations regarding menstruation in general. After all, the rags which women have used in the past were not unhygienic simply because they were made of cloth - they are unhygienic because a piece

of cloth used during menstruation is considered so taboo it cannot be hung out to dry in direct sunlight, which would have acted as a disinfectant. Breaking the stigma and taboo surrounding the subject is essential when it comes to nudging people towards making a switch to eco-friendly and sustainable periods.

## **Conclusion**

It is important to recognise that not all people who menstruate can afford to make this switch towards menstrual sustainability. Many people who have periods are afflicted with PCOS/PCOD and similar conditions which may sometimes result in periods going on for longer than a week. Many may not have access to washrooms or time during long working hours. Moreover, not everyone can afford the investment of the first purchase. We must remember that menstrual products are only one part of the growing plastic buildup, and for real change to take place in the world, we need governments to cooperate on matters of climate change and sustainability and the impositions of bans on the usage of plastic. There is no need to shame people on an individual level who cannot make such a drastic change. What we need is for those who are privileged enough, to take the first step by at least considering making a switch to eco-friendly and sustainable periods.



# LETTER TO EARTH

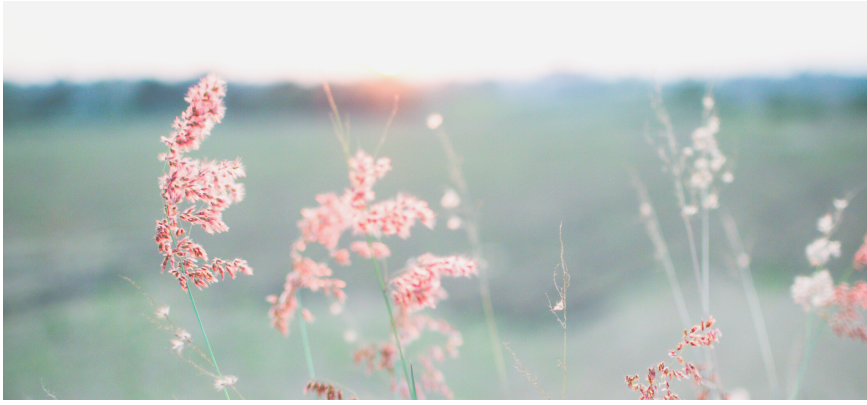
*A letter & artwork by Anchal Singh*

*Dear Earth,*

*I am sorry for what humans did to you. Maybe this world is not ours, we forget that the earth will take its revenge some day or other. Maybe, it will give us something in return of all the wrongs we did to the earth. And, who knows in clash between nature and humans, humans have to sacrifice their lives so that they can never give pain to the earth, maybe someday power of earth will beat the power of man!*



About the Contributor - Anchal Singh is a blogger, writer, and poetess who reflects different aspects of life through her writings. She believes that be it anything, either you should give it all, or you shouldn't care at all. There's nothing in between. Her motto is to do something for mankind and humanity.



## ABOUT THE WRITER

*Ojaswi Gupta is a 2nd year law student hailing from Guwahati, Assam. She loves to pen down her thoughts into poems, stories, blogs etc.*

## SAVING TREES AMIDST DEFORESTATION

*Written by Ojaswi Gupta*

Save the trees,  
Save the Earth,

The world is losing its gravity  
for the deeds of human  
are destroying it's purity,  
I wanna ask, 'How are you'  
for you'll have a brilliant thousand  
lies to laugh and ignore it.

Flowers like you bloom  
and stars like you shine  
Awake at night,  
I close my eyes to sleep  
thinking about your banishment  
shattering from huge bark  
strumbling down to debris.

Deforestation happening,  
beginning the era of evilness  
Owned by animals

... (contd.. on next page)



## BIODIVERSITY TRIVIA

*Hangul, the state animal of the state of Jammu & Kashmir, is endemic to the national park of Dachigam National Park.*

## SAVING TREES AMIDST DEFORESTATION

*Written by Ojaswi Gupta*

(contd.... from last page)

ruined by humans  
tearing away the bones  
fracturing your hair line skull,  
The early sunlight raptures  
blooms under the canopies  
and the trees leave their taller  
brothers to topple to ashes.

A creation of such wonder and beauty  
stood so still and tall  
The swishing leaves singing a melodious song,  
like a cradle song for a distant man from home  
Now, man is blinded with treasures  
forgetting the tree's noble worth  
knocking down the balance to abort  
but never if Mother Nature takes revenge  
he will be the first one to be caught.



# HUMANS FOR NATURE

*We humans have been lucky enough to have humans around us who have been enthusiastic, rebellious at times, and generous always to fight for our mother nature. Humans for Nature is such a segment in our newsletter where we cover such personalities.*



In this edition of Humans for Nature, we cover a stellar wildlife conservationist. He is Dharmendra Khandal. He presently heads the Tiger watch organization at the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve. He started his

journey like other volunteers at Bombay Natural History Society(BHNS) with his first voyage to Rajasthan studying the cause behind the heavy wildlife poaching in the area. This mission was but a mere starting of a seventeen-year (still counting) long journey of Dr. Dharmendra Khandal who presently heads the Tiger watch organization at the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve. Being a native of Rajasthan, he completed his Ph.D. in Ecology and shifted to Mumbai. It was his encounter with great wildlife photographer Bibhas Amonkar (the "Butterfly man of India") that ignited in him the lamp to lighten the lives of hundreds of animals. The main work performed by him includes doing surveys, propagating educational values to tribal communities, saving tigers, and rehabilitating the poacher community.

Dr. Khandal's NGO has made a significant difference through their approach towards the poachers. The Mogiyas, a small community living in interiors of Rajasthan, poach the animals, majorly tigers and other big cats. Around 2006, they started the Mogiya Hostel for the Mogiya children to get educated. His steps are testament to the aphorism - One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.





# That's all folks!

Dear Reader,

For more such news & updates on environmental matters, head onto our website at [www.greenerthingsgt.org](http://www.greenerthingsgt.org).

Our Instagram handle - @ [\\_greenerthings\\_](https://www.instagram.com/_greenerthings_)

Our Twitter Handle - @ [things\\_greener](https://twitter.com/things_greener)

Our Facebook page - [The Greener Things](https://www.facebook.com/TheGreenerThings)

We would be very happy to receive your contributions for our next edition of Nature's Narrative. To submit entries for our next edition of Nature's Narrative, mail us at [greenerthings.gt@gmail.com](mailto:greenerthings.gt@gmail.com).

A Question before we conclude this edition of Nature's Narrative -

Whether this edition of Nature's Narrative is forwarded to you by someone?

If yes, you could yourself subscribe to our newsletter by clicking [here](#).

We value your suggestions, mail us your suggestions to [greenerthings.gt@gmail.com](mailto:greenerthings.gt@gmail.com).