

Eco-bridges for the movement of tigers

Marking boundaries: A tiger urinating to mark its territory in the Dewada buffer area of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra.

In a first of its kind, Telangana State will have eco-friendly bridges over a canal cutting across the tiger corridor linking the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) in the Chandrapur district of Maharashtra with the forests in Telangana's Kumram Bheem Asifabad district. The intervention requires the laying of fertile soil to grow grass and plants over the structure, so that fragmentation of the reserve forest is camouflaged.

The 'eco-bridges' will be constructed at key spots along the 72 km-long, and at some places over a kilometre wide, right flank canal of the Pranahita barrage in the Bejjur and Dahegaon mandals, according to Chief Engineer (Projects) K. Bhagwanth Rao.

One of the locations tentatively earmarked for the eco-bridge is a spot close to Sulgupalli in the Bejjur forest range. Here, the canal is over a kilometre wide and the need to facilitate the movement of wild animals is quite necessary.

The concept emerged after visits by experts from the Wildlife Board of India and the Wildlife Institute of India. They were concerned about the large-scale destruction of pristine forest along the corridor, which would result in cutting off tiger movement between TATR and Bejjur.

The Telangana Irrigation Department has given its consent for the construction of the eco-bridges. Recommendations on the size and locations of the bridges are awaited from the National Board of Wildlife, Mr. Rao said.

In recent years, big cats from the TATR have ambled into the mixed and bamboo forests of the Bejjur range via the Sirpur forests. The TATR and its buffer area, which are contiguous with the Sirpur forests, boast of a speedily multiplying tiger population, the cause of the frequent migration of tigers into Sirpur and Bejjur.

Conduct Civil Rights Day on 30th of every month, says Collector

Australian minister, law-makers and others participate

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President of India inaugurates the 200th anniversary celebrations of the Paika Rebellion of Odisha

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The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the 200th anniversary celebrations of the Paika Rebellion of Odisha today (July 20, 2017) in New Delhi.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that it was indeed a privilege for him to be present on the occasion of inauguration of year-long celebration of Bi-Centenary of the Paika Bidroha of Odisha. He congratulated the people of the country and especially those of Odisha on the occasion. He stated that 40 years before the revolt of 1857, which was later termed as 1st War of Indian Independence against British Colonialism, a battle was fought under the leadership of Baxi Jagabandhu of Odisha. Many scholars, researchers and historians have opined that the Paika Rebellion of 1817 was India's first organized armed rebellion against British Raj. He said that completion of two hundred years of this popular uprising was a special event. The legend of the heroics of Buxi Jagabandhu continues to inspire the people of Odisha. It is time, this struggle and sacrifice by a generation of Odia people got its due place in the annals of history.

The President said that the Paika uprising was in the nature of a rebellion by people of Odisha. It was aimed at upholding the rights of the Odia people and sovereignty of Odisha. Paika Rebellion was not only the rebellion of Paikas, it was a National War waged by ordinary people at the grassroots level who resented the dispossession of their Sovereign of his rights and the consequential repressive measures that followed. As we celebrate 200 years of the Paika Rebellion, it is time to remember the great history of our country and pay respect to our great heroes. Along with Buxi Jagabandhu it is time to pay respects to other great warriors of Paika Bidroha who fought side by side such as Dinabandhu Samantray Mohapatra, Dama Subudhi Manjaraj, Samanta Madhaba Chandra Routray (Dalbehera of Tapanga), Pindiki Bahubalendra, Krutibas Patsani and many more heroes of Paika Bidroha.

The President congratulated the Government for recognizing this great event of our cherished history of freedom struggle. He said that the year-long celebrations should be documented for future guidance at the end of the year. He also urged historians to concentrate on indigenous source material available in folk songs and folk stories narrated over the years by one generation to another.

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Ram Nath Kovind is 14th President of India

Ram Nath Kovind. File | Photo Credit: [R.V. Moorthy](#)

Ram Nath Kovind was on Thursday declared elected as India's 14th President polling 65.6% of the vote defeating the Opposition's joint candidate, former Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar, who secured 34% of the vote.

Mr. Kovind will be the second Dalit President of India after late President K.R. Narayanan but, more significantly, the first from politically significant Uttar Pradesh and the first person from the BJP to hold the office of President since Independence.

Speaking to the press after returning officer for the poll, Anoop Mishra, declared him elected, Mr. Kovind said it was an "emotional moment" for him.

"I never dreamed of this position nor was it a goal. My election to this post is a message to all those who discharge their duties with honesty and integrity," he said, promising to uphold the Constitution of India and follow the policy of *Sarve Bhavantu Sukheenaha* or peace and prosperity to all.

Ram Nath Kovind's long journey to Raisina Hill

The voting for the poll had been held on Monday, and counting began in Parliament House on Thursday morning continuing up to early evening.

The total number of MPs and MLAs who cast their votes was 4851, bearing a combined value of 1090300. However, with 77 votes being declared invalid — 21 from Parliament alone — the total number of valid votes was 4774, bearing a combined value of 1069358. Mr. Kovind polled 2930 of these votes — bearing a value of 702044 — and Ms. Kumar 1844 votes — with a value of 367314.

The value of each vote of an MP was 708. Among the States, each vote in Uttar Pradesh had the highest value of 208, while each vote from Sikkim had the lowest value of seven. Mr. Kovind got the highest number of votes — 335 — from U.P. and the lowest — just 1 — from Kerala.

Ms. Kumar secured the highest number of votes — 273 — from West Bengal and drew a blank in Andhra Pradesh.

The polling was marked by cross-voting in various States where many Opposition members favoured Mr. Kovind.

According to figures available, cross-voting took place in Gujarat, Tripura, Goa, Delhi and Maharashtra in favour of Mr. Kovind. As many as 11 Congress MLAs appeared to have voted for Mr. Kovind in Gujarat, a State which is to go for Assembly polls at the end of the year.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was one of the first to wish the President-elect, tweeting out pictures taken 20 years ago at a wedding in Mr. Kovind's family and a more recent one with Mr. Kovind and his family at the prime ministerial residence, 7, Lok Kalyan Marg. Mr. Modi also praised Ms. Kumar for her campaign which was in the "spirit of democratic ethos, and values" which "we are all very proud of."

Says BJP will campaign against corruption, law and order problems and lack of development work in Himachal Pradesh

The process of holding the requisite Board Meetings and Shareholder Meetings has been completed in phases in September 2017.

Ruben George is staying at Ram Nath Kovind's house at Kalyanpur, near Kanpur

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