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Market for Animal Body Parts and Tiger Poaching: National Environmental Laws to Counter this Scenery

Devashish Bhattacharyya^a

^aAmity University, Noida, India

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Indian tigers and wild animals are being poached and illegally transported, which is a huge threat to the country's biodiversity. Tigers are iconic creatures, and their body parts, along with those of other animals, are in high demand on the black market both nationally and internationally. Even though India is home to the world's biggest tiger protection unit, poaching is at an all-time high, despite severe rules and strong enforcement. In this research paper, I've used many articles, blogs, journals, government policies, and newspaper archives as the major source of information to estimate tiger poaching and the illegal trade in its body parts, as well as the efforts of the Indian government and other government agencies to change this vicious scenario of the black markets. The data was georeferenced in order to understand the specifics of wildlife poaching, its demand, and its location in the Indian states. Incidents were statistically linked to tiger density, tiger reserves, and plenty of other socioeconomic variables. Nails and teeth are highly sought after on the black market, as seen by my research, as opposed to other body parts. Finding the people responsible for animal poaching and the black market trade in its body parts is essential, as this study shows. A more specific and successful method would be capable of fixing the problem, according to my assessment of the existing Indian forest department and government policy.

Keywords: *poaching; tiger; wildlife; India; black markets.*

INTRODUCTION

As a kind of organised crime, the black market trade in prohibited animal products has increased in recent decades, posing a serious threat to many endangered species throughout the globe and India. India has a wide range of animal products such as animal claws, bones, shells, snake skins, rhino horns, turtle shells, caged birds such as parakeets, mynas, munias, deer antlers, bear bile, etc. The statistics speak for themselves. In 2013, around 44 rhinos were poached in Assam.¹ From 2008 to 2014, approximately 3,350 pangolins were poached in India,² 150 million seahorses³ were used annually in the Traditional Medicine trade in Oriental Traditional Medicinal Systems, and another million were caught yearly for the aquarium trade, with a significant proportion coming from India. India encapsulates 7,00,000 birds per year.⁴ Even though tigers have been declared India's national animal, hunters and traffickers in the illegal black market still see them as an easy target. Wild animal trafficking is widespread in India. The situation is exacerbated by porous international land boundaries and limited enforcement. There has been an alarming increase in illicit trade and the black market of native and non-native species, putting biodiversity and wildlife preservation at risk. From bird eggs to lemurs to tigers, illegal traffickers attach price tags on a broad variety of animal products to sell their body parts on the black market. There are still black marketplaces in Bihar cities like Sonpur and Sitamarhi where live elephants may be acquired for a variety of reasons.

Bird trade is one of the most prominent forms of wildlife trade in India's black markets. China is the world's biggest exporter of animal body parts on the black market, followed by India. The present policies and laws do not properly address the problems.

The Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 imposes severe restrictions on the trade and trapping of all wild species, as well as on tiger poaching. Many birds, tigers, and other wild animals are killed in captivity or while being transported as part of illegal commerce and the black market.

¹ Perna Singh Bindra, 'Trading biodiversity for profits' (*The Pioneer*, 25 June 2014)

<<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2014/columnists/trading-biodiversity-for-profits.html>> accessed 06 May 2022

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

⁴ *Ibid*

Together with governmental authorities, **WWF** and **TRAFFIC** are combating this vicious and depraved trade. More than 50 interventions have been conducted by **TRAFFIC** to prevent illicit wildlife trading in the black market. In order to protect India's biodiversity from poaching and illicit trafficking, people and stakeholders must work together. There are no excuses for purchasing illegal animal goods and artifacts. Many animals' futures are jeopardised because of the unlawful wildlife trade. You might be breaking the law and putting animals at risk at the same time. Also, try to dissuade your family and friends from doing the same.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Once upon a time, tigers were a mark of Indian pride and an element of the country's rich cultural legacy. Tigers are also the national animal of India. Even though tigers have been technically designated as endangered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), their numbers are increasing. International wildlife traffickers have increased their demand for tiger body parts on the worldwide black market. Poaching has resulted in the disappearance of tigers in the woodlands.

Conservation groups and campaigners, on the other hand, confront several challenges when working with animals. People's fixed ideas and ancient customs are only two of the numerous obstacles that must be overcome. Wild animals in distress face a number of obstacles that include a lack of financial resources, delays in prosecution due to red tape, and the exploitation of legal loopholes by wildlife offenders in order to avoid punishment. Recently, a spate of tiger deaths in Maharashtra has brought to light the grave risk that poachers represent to India's endangered big animals. One of the tigers discovered dead on April 20 was a pregnant four-year-old tigress. They suspect that poachers in Yavatmal's Mukutban range ignited a fire outside the cave to capture her. To remove her claws, she was strangled with strong wire and her paws were cut off.

Tiger fatalities in Maharashtra have increased dramatically over the last several months, reaching previously unheard-of levels. In 2018, there were 20 reported tiger deaths, followed by 22 in 2019 and another 20 in 2020. This happened over a year. Maharashtra, on the other

hand, has had 17 tigers killed in the last three months alone. Poachers allegedly killed 11 of these tigers, or they died of mysterious circumstances. The Covid-19 pandemic, according to wildlife specialists, has left India's wild cats increasingly more susceptible to poachers. Millions of people in India have lost their livelihoods as a result of lockdowns, and more are resorting to poaching as an outcome. As a result of the pandemic, forest monitoring has grown more negligent. Due to the pandemic, tourist activity has decreased, allowing poachers to operate unchecked in the areas they used to protect.

The world's biggest concentration of tigers may be found in India. It is, nevertheless, the world's capital of animal body parts and tiger hunting for the global and domestic black market. Poaching tigers are said to be the worst in Uttar Pradesh, with Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra in a close second and third place, respectively. Experts believe that the majority of tiger poaching cases occur outside of protected areas. Outside of protected areas, tigers are at risk from poachers since they are not under the watchful eye of rangers. For a variety of reasons, tiger poaching continues in India, despite the country's strict regulations. To begin with, this is a very profitable business. A single tiger's body parts can bring as many lakhs of rupees in profits. Though the killing of tigers is illegal in India, prosecutions for poaching are uncommon. Only 4% of tiger poaching prosecutions have resulted in punishments, according to a recent study. In India, tiger poaching is thriving because forest authorities are more interested in facilitating the trade than in enforcing a ban. A four-year-old pregnant tigress with four foetuses in her womb was brutally murdered by unknown poachers in the Mukutban forest range, probably one of the most shocking incidents.⁵ The forest authority kept the incident undercover for more than 24 hours for reasons that only they knew of.

Maharashtra has lost 17 tigers in a little over three months. At least 11 of these deaths have been attributed to poaching or other unexplained causes.

- A tigress has been killed in the Pandharkawda division.

⁵ Vijay Pinjarkar, 'Pregnant tigress in Maharashtra choked to death, paws chopped' (*The Times of India*, 27 April 2021) <<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/pregnant-tigress-choked-to-death-paws-chopped/articleshow/82264828.cms>> accessed 10 May 2022

- The death of a tigress in a wire snare in Ghonsa in the Maregaon range has stumped forest authorities.

Maharashtra has had a disproportionately high number of tiger fatalities in the last three months of 2018 (20), 2019 (22), and 2020 compared to the yearly average of 20. It's unclear whether or not authorities were allowing the poachers enough time to flee. In order to ensure the survival of India's tigers, any connections between government officials and poachers should be looked into.

Tigers are killed for two main causes:

- Threats they pose to animals and/or humans, real or imagined.
- Earning a profit.

There was a time when tigers were hunted for their furs and skins. Despite the fact that some are still being sold illegally, public awareness efforts and international trade prohibitions have lowered the demand. Predators such as tigers have been unlawfully shot or poisoned by eating baited corpses. In traditional Chinese medicine, it is thought that the bones of tigers, along with other portions of their bodies, may have medicinal value. Due to well-organized poaching connections and a lack of resources in tiger habitats to employ, equip, and educate law enforcement agents, India's illicit commercial business is tough to manage.

More than a dozen new dog squads have been trained in wildlife preservation and anti-poaching, and they will soon join the 11 current dog squads in India. The event was attended by leaders from seven "tiger states" (Assam, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttarakhand)⁶ that are home to substantial populations of wild tigers, who are at risk of extinction because of high levels of poaching and international trade. There have been additional steps taken by India to address the huge black-market wildlife trafficking that has been inadequately recorded and enforced in addition to the new dog squad personnel. The increasing focus on educating law enforcement officials to combat illicit trade

⁶ Apoorva Joshi, 'India steps up efforts to combat wildlife trade' (*Mongabay*, 9 October 2015) <<http://web.archive.org/web/20220122001228/https://news.mongabay.com/2015/10/india-steps-up-efforts-to-combat-wildlife-trade/>> accessed 11 May 2022

and forestry professionals to protect wildlife from poaching is one of the measures included in the package of actions. Experts note that, despite the lack of statistics on the number of arrests and convictions, these initiatives show that the nation is increasing its ability to tackle wildlife crime. The international wildlife trade is estimated to be worth \$23 billion a year worldwide.⁷ There's no way to know how many animals are being smuggled into India or how much money is changing hands in this illegal trade.

The scope of the issue may be seen by looking at some of the accessible data. Data from India's National Crime Records Bureau shows that there were 770 incidents of wildlife crime in 2014, which resulted in 1,349 arrests. There have been 18 tigers killed by poachers or their body parts recovered from dealers so far, compared to 23 tigers murdered in 2014, according to the Wildlife Protection Society of India.

Poaching wild animals for food or ceremonial purposes is more widespread than one would expect in India, despite the country's limited domestic wildlife trade. It's a different story when it comes to wildlife crime that feeds into worldwide black markets. Tonics and oriental medicines, as well as home décor, are sourced from India. These items are then sold on the underground market in countries like China. Tigers, leopards, and other wild cat species are among the main species targeted by this merchant for sale on the black market, as are bears, musk deer, elephants, rhinoceroses, and a variety of birds. A very well-organized and cross-state and worldwide criminal commerce exists in India for these animals.

In the animal black market, demand for African elephant ivory has skyrocketed, which has led to an upsurge in elephant poaching in India. Wildlife trafficking is a major problem in India, and the government and environmental organisations are working together to prevent it. An inadequate and expensive intelligence-gathering apparatus, as well as a lack of financial resources and contemporary technology, has contributed to the weakening of wildlife crime investigations in India. As a result, India's natural habitats are at risk because of mild legal penalties and a lack of national and state-level attention to these crimes.

⁷ Sarah Fowler, 'Wins for Sharks and 'Mini Mantas' at CITES' (*Save Our Seas*, December 2016) <<http://web.archive.org/web/20220213111914/https://saveourseasmagazine.com/wins-sharks-mini-mantas-cites/>> accessed 11 May 2022

There have been a number of significant steps made by the Indian government and the NTCA to preserve and conserve tigers and other endangered species.⁸

LEGAL STEPS

- ❖ Amendment of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 in 2006 to provide enabling provisions for constituting the National Tiger Conservation Authority under section 38 IV B and the Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau under section 38⁹ IV C.
- ❖ Enhancement of punishment for offence in relation to the core area of a tiger reserve or where the offence relates to hunting in the tiger reserves or altering the boundaries of tiger reserves, etc.
- ❖ Comprehensive guidelines under section 38 1 (c)¹⁰ of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 were issued for Project Tiger and Tourism in Tiger Reserves on 15th October 2012.¹¹

ADMINISTRATIVE STEPS

- ❖ NTCA was established on September 4th, 2006, with effect for the purposes of enhancing the conservation of tigers, ensuring normative standards in tiger reserve management, preparing a conservation plan specific to a reserve, presenting an annual audit report to Parliament, and establishing a Tiger Conservation Foundation.
- ❖ The establishment of a multi-disciplinary Wildlife Crime Manage Bureau (Wildlife Crime Control Bureau) to effectively control illicit wildlife trading with effect from June 6, 2007.
- ❖ Supporting tiger reserve States with funding, enhancing anti-poaching efforts, including a monsoon patrolling strategy and the military veterans or home security

⁸ 'Steps Taken to Protect Tigers in India' (*Best Current Affairs*, 30 November 2016)

<<http://web.archive.org/web/20171103061550/http://www.bestcurrentaffairs.com/steps-taken-protect-tigers-india>> accessed 12 May 2022

⁹ Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, s 38(iv) C

¹⁰ Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, s 38(1) C

¹¹ Rajeev Chandrasekhar, 'Steps Taken for Preservation of Tigers in Karnataka' (*Rajeev*, 19 March 2015)

<<https://rajeev.in/?questionasked=steps-taken-for-preservation-of-tigers-in-karnataka>> accessed 13 May 2022

guards deployed as anti-poaching teams, and improving communication and wireless facilities are just some of the ideas that have been floated.

- ❖ The tiger population has been estimated using a scientific approach that has been widely used. Tiger conservationists may use the results of this estimate and evaluation as benchmarks.

FINANCIAL STEPS

- ❖ State governments get financial and technical assistance from nationally backed programmes, such as "Project Tiger" and "Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats," in order to improve their capacity to conserve wildlife. These programmes aim to improve wildlife conservation.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- ❖ Aside from a convention on tiger conservation with China, India and Nepal have a bilateral agreement on regulating transboundary illicit wildlife trading and conservation.
- ❖ In September 2011, the Sundarbans Royal Bengal Tiger was protected by a deal with Bangladesh.
- ❖ In order to work together with the Russian Federation, a sub-group on the protection of tigers and leopards was formed.
- ❖ In order to address issues that are relevant to tiger conservation on a global scale, the Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries was founded with India as one of its founding members.

OTHER STEPS

- ❖ Under the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of "Project Tiger," the STPF has been made operational in the states of Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Odisha, out of the 13 initially selected tiger reserves, with assistance from the central government amounting to 60 percent.

- ❖ An online database of tiger-related crimes has been established thanks to a collaborative effort with **TRAFFIC-INDIA**, reserve-specific security strategies are now being established using general criteria.
- ❖ Implementation of a tripartite memorandum of understanding with states that own tigers, which is related to the flow of funds for the efficient execution of tiger conservation efforts.

By tightening environmental regulations and other legislation that serve the same purpose, India is attempting to prohibit the regional and international trade in animal body parts on the black market and the poaching of tigers. India is doing its utmost effort to end the vicious cycle of black markets and alter the landscape of wildlife conservation in India.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The vast majority of the recorded seizures took place either while the item was being transported or when the holders were attempting to sell or give it away to a third party. Only thirteen of the total cases show domestic sales of tiger parts. The great majority of domestic law cases involve the sale of paws, claws, skins, and teeth. There have been tales of persons attempting to sell authentic tiger skin and claws on the underground market for a high price. Aside from that, there have been instances of individuals attempting to sell imitation tiger skin and claws. At the same moment that the police took the false skin, the offender's tiger paw, claw, and tooth were also taken into custody by the authorities. According to the results of the research paper, the highest demand on the black market is for the skin, followed by the claws, and then the teeth.

There is a far lower demand for any of the other body parts. Although the bulk of the captives was young when they were taken during the handover, their ages ranged anywhere from 24 to 60 years old. This was true in the majority of the incidents in which the seizure occurred. Members of indigenous tribes who are found to be in possession of tiger body parts are often subject to arrest by the police. You may discover information on the sentences that were given out by the Indian court for the unlawful poaching of tigers and other animals in India for their body parts on the website of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau. These animals were poached

for their body parts. According to the public information, only fourteen persons were given a sentence of seven years in jail. Of those fourteen, only two were penalised for having tiger body parts, while the other twelve were penalised for hunting. This research paper makes it very evident that there is a disparity in the statistics on tiger seizures and the crimes that are tied to them. It seems that the pieces (parts of tigers) are even accessible in jewellery shops when checking into particular incidents from the newspaper archives. Reports from a variety of news sources indicate that a significant number of consumers want their decorations modified to include tiger claws and teeth.

It is stated that the people who reside in the Karnataka region have superstitious beliefs that if they preserve tiger pieces like a claw, it would bring them money and prevent them from becoming sick. Additionally, they believe that keeping tiger parts will protect them from evil spirits. This information comes from a report that was compiled by Chamarajanagar. According to the statistics, the vast majority of potential seizures took place in privately owned cars, while just a handful took place on public modes of transportation. Once it reaches the outside of the forest, it is obvious that there is a network that distributes the things over several connections. This makes it very difficult for law enforcement and other animal security forces to tell where one link ends and another begins in the chain. It seems that a large number of samples came from Indian tiger reserves and that most of the poachers were local forest dwellers, according to my research.

THE STATE-WISE INTENSITY OF TIGER AND ANOTHER ANIMAL POACHING IN INDIA

LIST OF TIGER RESERVES IN INDIA

S. No	Tiger Reserves	States
1	Nagarjunsagar	Andhra Pradesh
2	Namdhapa	Arunachal Pradesh
3	Pakke	Arunachal Pradesh

4	Kamlang	Arunachal Pradesh
5	Kaziranga	Assam
6	Manas	Assam
7	Nameri	Assam
8	Orang	Assam
9	Valmiki	Bihar
10	Achanakmar	Chhattisgarh
11	Indravati	Chhattisgarh
12	Udanti-Sitanadi	Chhattisgarh
13	Palamau	Jharkhand
14	Bandipur	Karnataka
15	Bhadra	Karnataka
16	DandeliAnshi	Karnataka
17	Nagarhole	Karnataka
18	BiligiriRanganth Temple	Karnataka
19	Periyar	Kerala
20	ParambiKulam	Kerala
21	Bandhavgarh	Madhya Pradesh

22	Kanha	Madhya Pradesh
23	Panna	Madhya Pradesh
24	Pench	Madhya Pradesh
25	Sanjay Dubri	Madhya Pradesh
26	Satpura	Madhya Pradesh
27	Melghat	Maharashtra
28	Pench	Maharashtra
29	Tadoba-Andheri	Maharashtra
30	Sahyadr	Maharashtra
31	Nawegaon-Nagzira	Maharashtra
32	Bor	Maharashtra
33	Dampa	Mizoram
34	Satkosia	Odisha
35	Similipal	Odisha
36	Ranthambhore	Rajasthan
37	Sariska	Rajasthan
38	Mukandara	Rajasthan
39	Kalakad-Mundanthurai	Tamil Nadu

40	Mudumalai	Tamil Nadu
41	Anamalai	Tamil Nadu
42	Sathyamangalam	Tamil Nadu
43	Kawal	Telangana
44	Amrabad	Telangana
45	Rajaji	Uttarakhand
46	Corbett	Uttarakhand
47	Dudhwa	Uttar Pradesh
48	Pilibhit	Uttar Pradesh
49	Buxa	West Bengal
50	Sunderbans	West Bengal

BUDGET ALLOCATION OF THE NTCA IN THE LAST 3 YEARS

The NTCA's 2017-2020 budget allocation is shown in the table below.

The budget has been reduced by Rs 6843 lakhs in comparison to the financial year 2018-19.

Head	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
NTCA	1,000.00	1,000.00	900.00
CSS (PT)	34,500.00	35,000.00	28,257.00
Total	35,500.00	36,000.00	29,157.00

India's Wildlife Board and the Ministry of Environment and Forests submitted recommendations for changes under the Wildlife Act that were implemented in 1991. The

country's animal population has been fast decreasing as a result of an increase in poaching, which prompted the proposals. Animal products were outlawed as a result of the amendment. In the *G. R. Simon v Union of India*¹² case, to protect his constitutional right to engage in any trade or profession, the petitioner (manufacturer of various animal-based products such as snakeskin briefcases, and snakeskin handbags) filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutional validity of this amendment.

There are certain animals that are dangerous and rarely serve a helpful role, he said. To this, the court said that **Article 19(6)**¹³ gives it authority to enact legislation that restricts the freedom to practise one's trade or profession in order to protect the general welfare of society. The preservation of the natural world is in everyone's best interest. Although many animals serve no beneficial use to people, they nevertheless need to be protected and every person has a responsibility to conserve wildlife and the environment, the court said further. As a result, the balance of justice was restored between basic rights and the interests of society.

The Indian Wildlife Protection Act was amended in 1991 to outlaw the importing of ivory. In the *Balram Kumawat v Union of India & Ors case*¹⁴, the petitioner stated that elephant fossil ivory (also known as mammoth ivory) was unable to use since it had been extinct for a long period prior to filing his complaint. Mammoth ivory is also banned under the 1991 amendment, according to the court, which ruled that the law prohibits the import of 'all kinds' of ivory, including mammoth. As well as being in line with Indian Constitutional Articles **48A** and **51A (g)**¹⁵, the **Wildlife Act** was also considered to be in compliance with many international treaties and agreements.

Demand for the body parts of tigers and other animals, which are often poached for sale in black markets, is on the rise. Tiger skin, bones, and claws are some of the most often confiscated animal products in the country of India. Claws and bones are in a close second and third place in terms of the number of requests for their parts. This is consistent with prior findings. Additionally, there is no need in black markets for other animal parts like paws or

¹² *G.R. Simon v Union of India* AIR 1997 Delhi 301

¹³ Constitution of India, 1950, art.19(6)

¹⁴ *Balram Kumawat v Union of India & Ors* (2003) 106 DLT 392 SC

¹⁵ Constitution of India, 1950, art.48A and art.51A(g)

skulls; yet, these are much sought by the Indian domestic black market. Luxurious furniture and home design sometimes include tiger skin as a decorative element. Traditional Chinese medicine uses tiger bones to make bone wine. In China and Vietnam, tiger bone wine is sold under a variety of brand names. In certain places of India, black magic involves the use of paws. Locketts, sculptures, religious artifacts, and traditional medicine are all made from tiger claws. Fake tiger claws are also made for the black market due to the great demand for them, illustrating the strength of that need. The black market is thirsty for tiger skin, bones, claws, and whiskers, etc. because individuals utilise various objects for different reasons, the demand for poached components varies.

Poaching was on the rise in India, and it seemed to be linked to an increase in the number of tigers in different habitats. There is also the possibility that the rise in poaching is linked to the stricter enforcement of Indian legislation. Seizure has been shown to be more prevalent in India's forests. The number of tigers and other wild animals being poached increased dramatically during the COVID-19 lockdown. Because of this, it is reasonable to believe that the most important tiger habitats in India are experiencing a significant loss of tigers that is now unaccounted for. There has been a significant increase in the number of tiger habitats as a consequence of initiatives by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). Information provided to law enforcement often results in seizures, and the people detained are primarily members of one or more tribes. When it comes to the seizure of tiger parts, the data unequivocally reveals that the bulk of arrests take place close to forest areas, and the individuals who are taken into custody are members of indigenous communities. Seizures are more often at export points than near reserves. According to the study, India has the greatest incidence of arrests for smuggling tiger parts and other animal body parts. In my opinion, the illicit components will be shipped through the Nepalese border, the Assam border, the Brahmaputra River, and the Mumbai port. The centre of the network can seldom be located in most seizures; only the beginning and finish can be located. When a sample is seized, enforcement authorities don't do enough to hunt out the sample's source.

CONCLUSION

Indian wildlife species have been decimated by the illegal sale of animal parts for profit, which is fueling the illegal wildlife hunting of tigers in particular. The virus can only persist if the host is able to support it. Humanity's existence is at stake if poaching is not reined in. In order to stop tiger and wildlife poaching in India, education is the most critical step. According to the most current figures, about 300 million Indians remain illiterate. The belief that animal parts have mystical healing powers has endured for ages and has been the driving force for unrestrained poaching. As a result, it is imperative that the public be made aware of the unbalance that poaching causes in the ecosystem.

Increasing the penalties for poaching is a necessary next step. Punishing a criminal is primarily intended to create in the minds of the offender and other people a feat that will discourage them from doing such activities in the future. The legislation may be rendered ineffective if the penalty is too light. The forest department needs stricter legislation to deter corruption so that employees are afraid to accept payments. The Indian Forest Department may be cleaned up by raising the salary of all government workers, which would eliminate the incentive for them to engage in corrupt practises. Aside from draining government resources, this strategy would assist raise the quantity of money in the government's treasuries by gradually lowering the amount of black money in the economy.

Even though the Indian government has passed many laws and started many projects, and there are many international and national institutions working to protect wildlife, the number of wildlife crimes has been going up over the past few decades. The reason for this is that criminal networks can continue to steal wildlife without caring about the consequences because of corruption, weak laws, weak courts, and light sentences. Because of these things, the illegal wildlife trade is a low-risk business that makes a lot of money. Most of the time, only the poachers, who are often poor locals, are caught. This means that the real masterminds and their network are safe and can strike again. All animals and birds are a part of our natural society, so it's up to us to take care of them, protect them, and keep them safe.