

INDO ASIA DARIES

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A morose looking Langur playing peekaboo with the camera in Bandhavgarh National Park. He looked at us solemnly, got clicked and ran off. Found in abundance and usually ignored in favour of viewing the more famous tigers, their antics are usually the stuff of fun anecdotes.

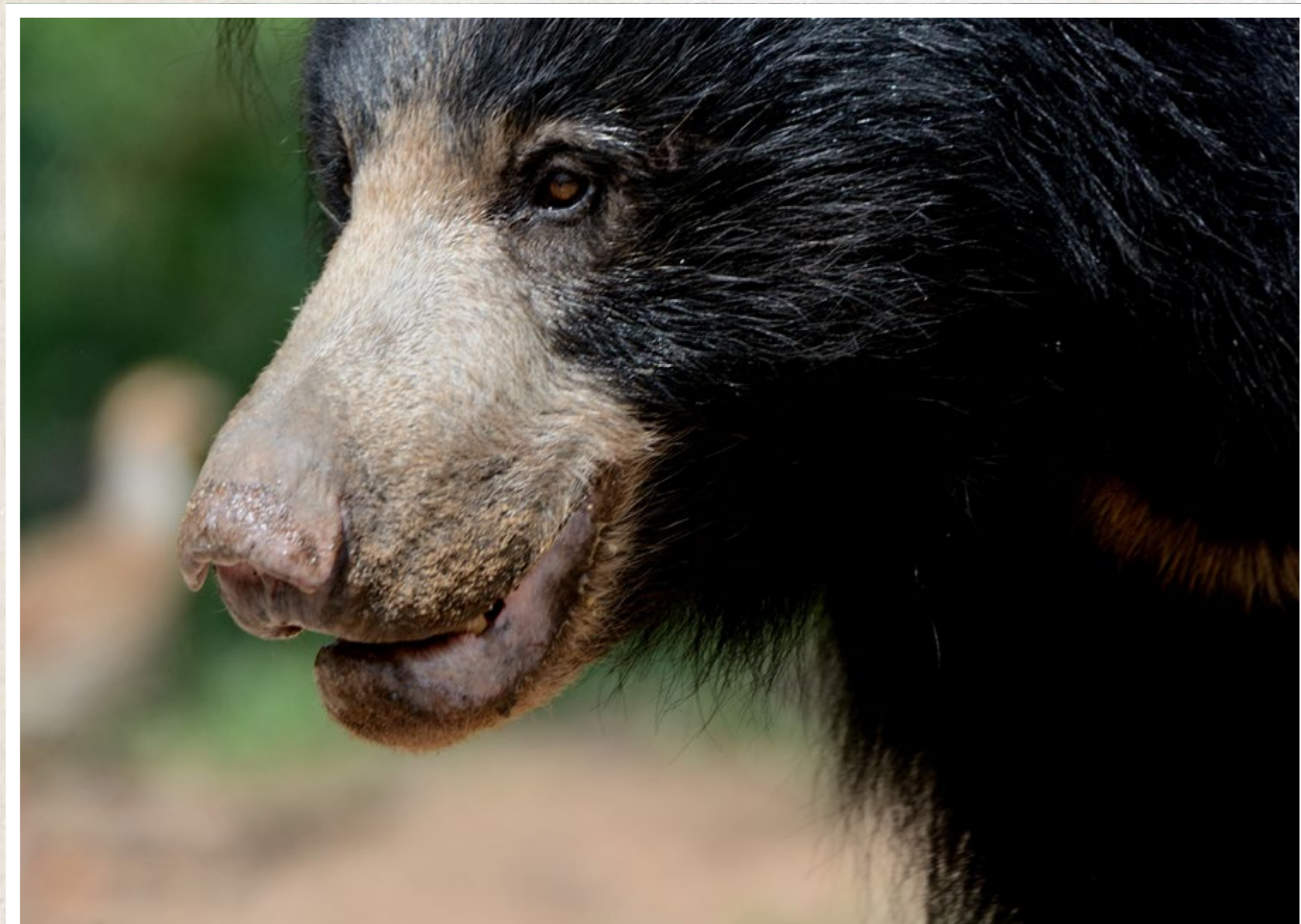
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PEEKABOO WITH THE CAMERA



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EMBRACE YOUR WILD SIDE

Thinking of going for a holiday? While there are many options you can consider for a holiday, wildlife expeditions have their own charm and thrill. After all, how often do you get to experience Mother Nature in all her glory untamed?

Ranthambore Tiger Reserve

Ranthambore is one of the country's largest National Parks spread over an area of 1,443 square kilometre, in Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan. It's also home to wild cats, leopards, sloth bears, hyenas, Indian foxes, crocodiles and jackals. The expansive three lakes inside the reserve, Padam Talao, Raj Talao and Malik Talao, act as the rendezvous point for the animals. The famous 'Diurnal' Tigers of the reserve only come out in the day, choosing to conserve energy at night. Flora to appreciate in Ranthambore include the Babul, Gurjan, Gum, Kadam, Khajur, Khair, Mango, Jamun, Ber, and Tamarind. The sight of Chhila, commonly known as the flame of the forest, which bears flowers that are bright orange-red colour, that inspired Priyanka in ways more than one.

Sunderban Tiger Reserve

Covering a massive area of 2585 sq km, Sunderban is home to the much acclaimed Royal Bengal tiger. A UNESCO World Heritage site, this tiger reserve derives its name from the 'Sundari' tree. Oh, the joy at sighting the aquatic mammals and reptiles that the reserve has to offer! Taking a walk in the world's largest mangrove forests, in one of the most biologically diverse natural ecosystems in the world is something one has to experience.

Unlike other National Parks and Tiger Reserves in India where jeeps are used for sightseeing purposes, Sunderban uses boats for transportation and sightseeing. Besides tigers, the aqua fauna also includes a diverse array of fish, crabs, crocodiles and Ridley sea turtles. There are about 248 bird species that can be found here including a large number of migratory birds that visit the park during winter

months every year. This is one of the few tiger reserves in India that are open for tourist access from the months of September to March. The finest time to visit is between December and February.

Bor Tiger Reserve

Set amidst the green expanse of 120 sq. km. in Wardha District in Maharashtra is the Bor Tiger Reserve. One of the most popular tiger reserves in Maharashtra, Priyanka was riveted by the variety of animals such as the tiger, fox, hyena, sloth bear, leopard, and sambar deer that prance about. A sight for sore city eyes, peacocks are in abundance.

The flora here is equally rich. This Reserve comprises of excellent teak bearing forests. There are different kinds of herbs which can be found here such as Waghori, Velatri, Vanbhandi, Wight, Gokhru, Tarwar, Tenella, and Tarota. Bamboo trees are at different places of this reserve. The climate at Bor Tiger Reserve is pleasant all through the year. The ideal time to visit Bor Tiger Reserve is during April to May. The tiger reserve remains closed from June to September due to monsoon season.

Melghat Tiger Reserve

Tucked away in the Satpura Hill Range and enclosed by the Tapti River, Melghat Tiger Reserve with its diverse fauna is a wildlife enthusiast's fantasy land. Spread over a large area and extending to Madhya Pradesh, this reserve has a very large and unrestricted area for the free movement of animals. Tigers, leopards, deers, bears, peacocks, monkeys and a variety of birds, eagle, vultures flock here as the Reserve offers varieties of habitats. The place has been maintained better than other forest reserves since there are no private hotels and resorts. To experience wilderness with great flora and fauna in the backdrop of mesmerising landscaping, Melghat is a must visit place.



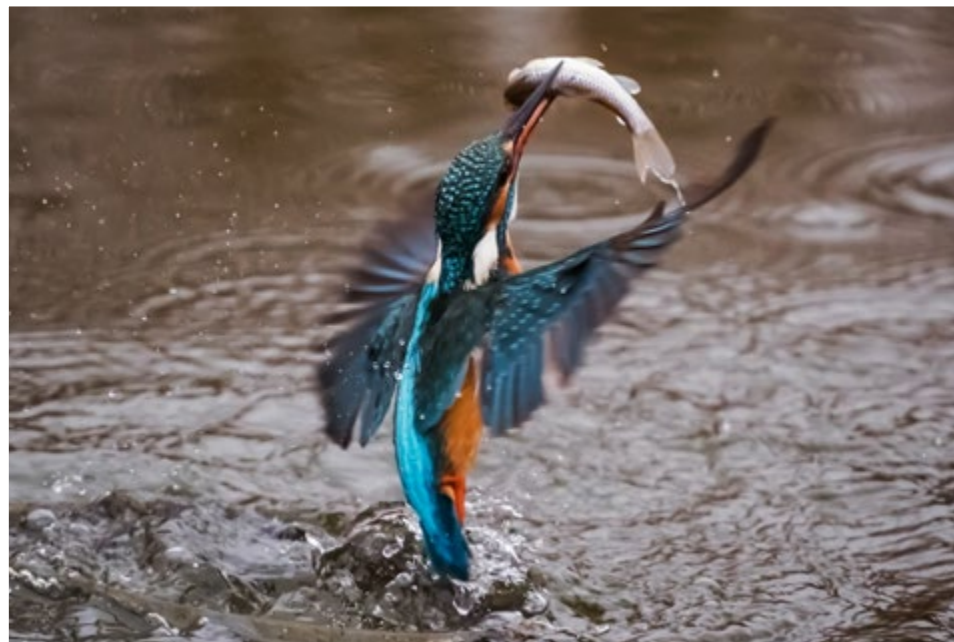
Footloose in Madhya Pradesh

A fascinating mesh of history, exotic wildlife, and scenic beauty has made this state famous the world over. It is probably for this reason that Madhya Pradesh Tourism promotes the state as India ka Dil or India’s heart as it showcases diversity.

Madhya Pradesh: The heart of India

Bandhavgarh, the place famous for the White Tiger was Priyanka’s first choice when she decided to embrace the wild.

Want to experience the jungle safari? You can either hop onto the back of a friendly elephant, or decide to take in the sights on a jeep. A power-packed early breakfast is highly recommended, and don’t forget the essentials – an insect repellent, water bottle, sunscreen, jacket! Oh yes, and your enthusiasm.



Kingfisher catching a fish

The tour guides are friendly, and share their knowledge about the reserve that is home to more than 28 species of mammals, 250 species of birds and 70 species of butterflies. Common Langurs, Rhesus Macaque, Tiger, Leopard, Asiatic Jackal, Sloth Bear, Ratel, Bengal Fox,

Striped Hyena, Jungle Cat, Wild Boar, Spotted Deer, Sambar, Chausingha, Neelgai (Blue-bull), Chinkara, Dhole, the small Indian Civet, Palm Squirrel and Lesser Bandicoot Rat are seen occasionally.



A Tiger

Leopard sightings though, are lucky, and a lot of Gazelle, deers, monkeys, birds like Crested Serpent Eagle, Woody Necked Stork, Ruddy Mongoose, can also be spotted. And tigresses too!

The picturesque Kanha National Park was the inspiration behind Rudyard Kipling's unforgettable classic, *Jungle Book*. The most striking features of this region were the open grassy meadows, where sighting blackbuck, swamp deer, sambhar and chitals are common.

This reserve is packed with surprises such as jackal fox, porcupines, hyenas, jungle cats,

pythons, pea fowls, hares, monkeys, mongoose, warblers, kingfishers, woodpeckers, owls and peacocks.

At a distance of 4 hours from Kanha, housed in the Seoni and Chhindwara districts of Madhya Pradesh, Pench National Park owes its name to the river Pench which cuts a path through the forests. Even though Pench is geographically not that distant from Kanha, it offers an entirely different experience altogether, one worth living.



Jungle Safari

TOP SPOT

IndiGo and Turkish Airlines announce codeshare agreement



IndiGo and Turkish Airlines have signed codeshare and mutual cooperation agreement enabling both carriers to provide more flexibility

of choice to their respective customers to fly on sectors between India and Istanbul, and beyond. As part of its international expansion strategy, this is the first codeshare agreement for IndiGo. Through this cooperation, Turkish Airlines will be offering new destinations in India as Marketing Carrier on IndiGo operated flights, while IndiGo customers will be able to reach many European destinations through Turkish Airlines' extensive network. This reciprocal arrangement will allow TK and 6E to provide seamless connections to their customers, besides enabling them to use through check-in and many other facilities. IndiGo will place its code "6E" on 20 points beyond Istanbul operated by Turkish Airlines. Similarly, Turkish Airlines will use its code "TK" on IndiGo-operated flights within India.

Taj opens Taj Aravali Resort & Spa, Udaipur



Taj has opened its second hotel in Udaipur – Taj Aravali Resort & Spa. Nestled in the foothills of the picturesque Aravali mountain ranges, the resort is spread across 27 acres of lush landscaped gardens. The resort has 92 luxurious rooms, suites and tents with panoramic views of the Aravalis. The design ethos is contemporary with a mix of traditional Rajasthani influences and furnishings inspired by Mewar's world-class equestrian heritage. The hotel is conveniently located an hour away from the airport.

Lemon Tree to operate 85 hotels by FY2021



Lemon Tree Hotels will be operating 85 hotels with 8,674 rooms across 57 cities by FY2021, informed Rattan Keswani, Deputy Managing Director, Lemon Tree Hotels and Director, Carnation Hotels. They have opened a few properties this year in Dehradun, Pune, Siliguri and Morjim, and plan to open an owned hotel in Mumbai, followed by Kolkata. The plan is to also start a managed property in Kalina, Mumbai.

Conference visa for India to soon go online



Post efforts by India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), the Ministry of Home Affairs will shortly launch an online module for submission of applications by the organizers of international conferences for seeking clearance from the Ministry. The clearance will be generated through the online system and sent to organizers. A copy of the clearance will also be endorsed to all Indian Missions/Posts.

Air Italy partners with Vistara to boost connectivity between India and Italy



Air Italy and Vistara have signed an interline commercial agreement to offer single tickets for all customers from Italy to a range of Indian destinations with effect from January 7. Under the agreement, Air Italy will offer its customers the opportunity to fly to and from Chennai, Goa, Amritsar, Bengaluru, Kochi, Kolkata and Hyderabad, in connection with its Milan Malpensa-Delhi and Milan Malpensa-Mumbai flights launched respectively on December 6 and 13, 2018.

Hampi Ranks Second in *New York Times* list of must-visit places for 2019



At the height of the Vijayanagara Empire in the 16th century, Hampi thrived as one of the largest and richest cities in the world. Its architectural legacy lives on in the south-western state of Karnataka with over 1,000 well-preserved stone monuments, including Hindu temples, forts and palaces. *The New York Times* has recognized its history and cultural capital and has ranked it second in the list of places to visit in 2019.

NEWS & VIEWS



MEET US AT



Indo Asia Tours will be participating in the below mentioned upcoming Travel events. You can schedule an appointment at marketing@indoasiatours.com to meet us in person at the show:

- **GITB Jaipur:** 28 Apr – 30 Apr, 2019, Jaipur, India

IA SAYS



Till the 90s, the gateway to Central India wild life parks were Nagpur and Jabalpur. There was just one hotel for the tourists in either city.

The drive from the hotel in Jabalpur to Bandhavgarh in the classic Willies Jeeps or station wagons would take almost 10 hours. We would be carrying picnic lunches, looking for a quaint place in the forest to take a break from the journey. Waiters would accompany us and tables would be laid. Lunch of piping hot soups, chilled drinks, amazing meals and desserts would take almost 90 minutes and we reached Bandhavgarh just before sunset. Early dinner was served and then the evening game drive was organised. Every jeep had a light man in addition to a naturalist and every group had two armed forest guards. The

sightings were very rewarding but what we all waited was for the “tigershow”. We would all cramp up on the “machan”, a slab of wood tied on the branches of a strong tree for “view”. The jeeps would form an arch a few meters away from the bait which could be a calf, goat or a sheep. The Tiger would in most cases get attracted by the desperate cries of the bait. The lights would go on. The Tiger would pounce on it. In a few minutes the poor bait was killed. Next morning, after a big jungle breakfast we would drive back into the forest and look for the big cat at every known water body and stop at every village and settlement inside the reserved forest and enquire about it.

Tourists also looked forward to tiger shows from elephant back. Early in the morning, a few elephants along with their “mahauts” would go out into the jungle. They would track a tiger, form a ring with the elephants and force the tiger towards the main entrance. Later, all the tourists would ride the elephant with 2-4 tourists per elephant and watch the tiger or even ride the elephant deeper in the jungle to watch the tiger eating its kill.

Today, most of these Wildlife sanctuaries are at a distance of maximum 5 hours from the gateway city. Trained naturalists, better vehicles, well established park management protocols have all added to the wildlife experience. Poaching has almost become negligible. Scientific methods are adopted for a yearly census. Most human settlements in the Wild Life Sanctuaries have been relocated outside the parks, all the people have been rehabilitated. The game drives are regulated to mornings and afternoons. No more baits and no more tiger shows. It’s absolutely a natural experience.

I invite you to join us on our next Familiarization Trip in April to explore these natural hidden treasures of Madhya Pradesh.

Sunirmol Ghosh

EMPLOYEE of THE MONTH!



Shobhit Kumar | Digital Marketing - E-commerce

Shobhit’s journey with Indo Asia started nine years ago. An adventurer at heart, Shobhit's love for new technology resonates perfectly with his profession. He is our ‘go-to’ person for new and unusual online marketing and social media ideas. He is most passionate about one place though and that’s Kerala.

His love for his two-year-old daughter takes precedence over everything else. But before her, his life was all about singing, music and table tennis. His many qualities make Shobhit an important asset for us.