

PADMAJA NAIDU HIMALAYAN ZOOLOGICAL PARK DARJEELING, WEST BENGAL NEWS LETTER OCTOBER 2013 – DECEMBER 2013

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From the Director's Desk.....

This is the final issue of Newsletter of PNHZ Park, Darjeeling for the year 2013. For the past three months the Zoo has organized training programme of IFS Officers on "Zoos as Window for Conservation of Species" and conducted workshop on "Red Panda (Ailurus fulgens) Population and Habitat Viability Assessment. A species Conservation Strategic Plan for Red Panda" in collaboration with Rotterdam Zoo, Netherlands, Central Zoo Authority, and Zoo Outreach Organization, Coimbatore.

One of the objectives of the Park is the Conservation Breeding of endangered species. Hence the Park gives priority to addition of new animals which helps to add new blood lines and prevents inbreeding of animals. During the last quarter the new acquisition includes two female Snow leopards (House name) "Lavani" and "Zima" of age three from Lodz Zoo Poland.

Regular visits by the schools and institutes continued round the year where they were guided by the zoo staffs and educated on issues regarding the zoo animals, conservation and wildlife.



Sri S.K.Dey, First Director of Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling

A.K. Jha, IFS
Director,
Padmaja Naidu Himalayan
Zoological Park, Darjeeling

Birth of Animals

One male faun of Barking deer (*Muntiacus muntjac*) was born to male Gokul and female Charu on 05.10.2013. Unfortunately the faun died on 31.10.2013 due to ill nursing by mother.

Acquisition of animals

On 06.10.2013, two female Snow leopards (House name) "Lavani" and "Zima" of age three from Lodz Zoo Poland arrived at the Park. The animals were kept for quarantine about a month in the Veterinary hospital of the Park and shifted to the Conservation Breeding Center of the Park. Now the animals are healthy and adapted to the environment of the Park.





4 Transfer of animals

1:1 Snow leopards (*Uncia uncia*) House name "Subash" and "Teesta" was transferred to the Topkeydara off display Breeding Center of the Park on 08.10.2013.

1:1 Common leopard (*Panthera pardus*) was transferred to Rashikbeel, Coochbehar on 10.10.2013.

One male Common leopard (*Panthera pardus*) was also transferred from the Park to the Himalayan Zoological Park Sikkim, Gangtok zoo on 29.10.2013.

On 17.11.2013 another pair of Snow leopards (*Uncia uncia*) House name "Prabhat" and "Ritu" were transferred to the off display Conservation Breeding Center at Topkeydara.

Two female Common langur (Semnopithecus entellus) was transferred from the Park to Rajkot Zoological Park, Gujarat.

Outreach Programme

Sl	Date	Name of school/Institute	Number of		
No.	00 10 2012	C 1 N'I (teachers	students/Trainees	incentives
1.	08.10.2013	Gyanoday Niketan	122	6	Visit to zoo and interaction
2.	09.10.2013	Gyanoday Niketan	94	6	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
3.	30.10.2013	Saraswati Vidhyadan	336	20	Visit to zoo and
		Lebong			interaction
4.	11.11.2013	Little Angles Children's	85	10	Visit to zoo and
		Home, Pedong			interaction
5.	12.11.2013	Forest Guard training	31	2	Visit to zoo and
		Center, Rajabhatkhawa 55 th			interaction
		Batch			
6.	13.11.2013	Rose Berry Nursery School	55	5	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
7.	14.11.2013	Feat Foundation Academy,	45	7	Visit to zoo and
		Lebong			interaction
8.	14.11.2013	Mount Carmel School	280	21	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
9.	14.11.2013	Gyanoday Niketan	190	6	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
10	14.11.2013	EFRC, Kurseong	10	1	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
11.	14.11.2013	Lower Tongsong Tea Estate,	21	5	Visit to zoo and
		MSK			interaction
12.	15.11.2013	Army Public Office	220	25	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
13.	15.11.2013	Vidhyasagar Primary	30	11	Visit to zoo and
		School, Bijanbari			interaction
14.	15.11.2013	World Vision India, NGO	60	13	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
15.	15.11.2013	Wisdom Academy	54	14	Visit to zoo and
		Darjeeling			interaction
16.	15.11.2013	Tashiding Junior Basic	25	6	Visit to zoo and
		School, Academy			interaction
17.	15.11.2013	Monalisa English School,	25	6	Visit to zoo and
1.0	16110010	Pokhriabong	50	_	interaction
18.	16.11.2013	Notre Dame School,	50	5	Visit to zoo and
10	16 11 2012	Kaijaley	20	4	interaction
19.	16.11.2013	Greendale Academy Aligarh	30	4	Visit to zoo and
20	16 11 2012	Bajar Community	25	2	interaction
20.	16.11.2013	St. Joseph's Convent	25	3	Visit to zoo and
		Kalimpong			interaction

1.	16.11.2013	Vidhyavani MSK Batasia	70	7	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
2.	23.11.2013	Kumudini Homes Higher	50	1	Visit to zoo and
		Secondary School			interaction
3.	24.11.2013	Namchi Public School	45	3	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
4.	27.11.2013	Eastern Forest rangers	28	1	Visit to zoo and
		College, Kurseong			interaction
5.	27.11.2013	Balason Bhanjang, Forest	28	5	Visit to zoo and
		Village, Ghoom			interaction
6.	01.12.2013	SSK, Kurseong	19	4	Visit to zoo and
					interaction
7.	18.12.2013	Pulbazar Junior Basic	25	8	Visit to zoo and
		School			interaction
8.	29.12.2013	Patikabari High School	52	8	Visit to zoo and
					interaction



















↓ Visits of VIP and their valuable comments

Date of visit	Name of the visitor	Designation/	Remarks
14.11.2013	Mr. B.C. Choudhary	Address Rettd Professor & CZA Zoo Evaluation Wildlife Institute of India Dehradun	PNHZP has only progressed upward in Zoo management and is setting standards for itself and other zoos. The zoo staff need to be complemented and special thanks to the leadership.
19.11.2013	Mr. Ajit Dey Mrs. Nalini Dey Mr. Tarun Dey Ms. Sneha Dey	22 Embassay Ct Great Neck New York ,USA	Overwhelming memories from the time my father Dilip Dey, forwarded the Park; happy to see that it has flourished well in the spirit of my father's vision. My wife Nalini, son Tarun, daughter Sneha joins me in thanking the staff for their hospitality.
20.11. 2013	Mr. Ing. Jiri Travnicek	Zoo Plzen, CZECH REP	Thank you
30.11.2013	Dr. Angela Glatson	Rotterdam Zoo, NL	Nice to see PNHZ Park again!
30.11.2013	Ms. Sonam Choden	WWF Bhutan, Thimphu	Very nice zoo enjoyed the visit, Best wishes.
30.11.2013	Dr. Awadesh Kumar	NERIST, Nirjuli, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh	Thanks for providing permission to have a well managed zoo and learn so many things from you.









♣ Workshop and training attended by Zoo Officials and staff

Name of the training	Name of the person	Place	Presented	Period
Workshop on "Building National Capacity for ex-situ Amphibian Management & Conservation"	Miss Upashna Rai Scientific Officer	Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Garden, Guwahati, Assam	"Himalayan Newt at Darjeeling Zoo"	10 th - 13 th Dec 2013
Zoo Directors Workshop "Zoos- Window to Biodiversity"	Mr. A.K. Jha IFS Director	Mysore , Karnataka	"Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling" "Ex-situ and In-situ Conservation linkage and Conservation in Darjeeling Hills"	16 th – 20 th Dec 2013
Workshop on "Red Panda (Ailurus fulgens) Population and Viability Assessment: A species Conservation Strategic Plan for Red Panda	Mr. J.B. Chettri WBFS Dy.	Siliguri	Red Panda (Ailurus fulgens) in West Bengal-1990 to 2013 Presented by Mr. A.K.Jha IFS, Director, PNHZ Park.	26 th - 29 th Nov 2013







↓ Inauguration of a new Off-display Conservation Breeding Centre for Snow leopard and Red Panda

A new off-display Conservation Breeding Centre for Snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*) and Red Panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) at Topkedara funded by the Govt.of West Bengal and Central Zoo Authority, MoEF was inaugurated on 08.10.2013 by the Honorable Minister in Charge (Forest) Shri. Hiten Barman along with Honorable North Bengal Development Minister Shri. Gautam Deb. The inauguration was followed up by the release of a pair of Snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*) by the two honorable ministers.

On 29.11.2013, Ms. Angela Glatston, International Stud book Keeper for Red Panda, Rotterdam Zoo, Dr. Awadesh Kumar NERIST, Nirjuli, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh and Ms. Sonam WWF Bhutan, Thimphu visited the Conservation Breeding Centre and placed in their valuable comments and suggestions.

Visitors Comment

Date	Name of the Person	Designation	Comment
29.11.2013	Dr. Angela Glastston	International Stud book keeper for Red panda Chair of the Red panda GSPM	I really like this facility for red pandas. My only suggestions would be more climbing opportunities and perhaps sorbus plants. I am sure the pandas will be happy here!
29.11.2013	Dr Awadesh Kumar	Department of Forestry NERIST ST, NIRJULI- 791109, Itanagar Arunachal Pradesh	I am very happy after looking entire conservation breeding enclosures of Red panda and snow leopard. It's really systematic and scientific design and prepared. I hope you will get good and remarkable results for this hard work. Good luck.
29.11.2013	Ms. Sonam Choden	WWF, Bhutan	It's a very nice facility for red pandas and snow leopard. I am sure they will be very happy here. All the best. Thank you for your hospitality and nice visit.

Training of IFS Officers on "Zoos as Window for Conservation of Species"

Two day training workshop on "**Zoos as Window for Conservation of Species**" was conducted by Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling for the Indian Forest Service Officers (IFS) sponsored by the Ministry of Environment and Forest Govt. of India from $7^{th} - 8^{th}$ November 2013 held at Siliguri.

On 7th morning the programme began with an inaugural session in the presence of Mr. P.T. Bhutia IFS, CCF, Northern Circle after which a total of sixteen participants departed for Darjeeling where a visit to Darjeeling Zoo, Conservation Breeding Center for Snow leopard and Red Panda including interaction with the Deputy Director and other officers of the Park was organized. The participants were exposed to the various Conservation Breeding Programmes of the Park, the need for breeding the endangered species in captivity, earlier reintroduction programme of Red Panda and ex-situ Management of the animals at the Park.

The second day included lecture by Dr. B.R. Sharma IFS on "Role of Conservation Breeding in Wildlife Conservation" where threats to Wildlife were highlighted with an urgent need to conserve India's forests and wildlife and the role played by the Zoos towards Conservation of species. The presentation also highlighted the need for Zoos, and linking Zoos with in-situ wildlife Conservation. Mr. A.K. Jha IFS, Director, Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling in his presentation focused on the Conservation Breeding Programmes of the Park with special emphasis on the Red Pandas, Snow leopard and other high altitude animals. Dr. S. Panda IFS, Director Nandankanan Biological Park, dealt with the Conservation Breeding Programme of Indian Pangolin another endangered species. The participants in the second half of the session were divided into two groups A and B where two topics were allotted to each groups "Zoos as an extension tool for society for group A and role of Zoos in Conservation for group B" after an hours discussion on the topics by the two groups each group presented their views as follows:

Groups – a Topic- Zoos as an extension tool for society

- Since the zoos are playing an important role in education, awareness, conservation and developing species specific data base the definition of the zoo as defined in Wildlife Protection Act 1972 be replaced so as to incorporate and encompass the above stated roles of zoos.
- Interpretation room is required in the zoos with displays highlighting the various aspects of animals housed in the zoo.
- Nature education camps/orientation program be organized for different target groups like students, professionals, researcher, NGOs, policy makers, judiciary, hotel association, press and media, police, tourism corporations etc.

- A long term plan for research/extension/ communication programs be developed and various sources of funding like CAMPA/Corporate sector/State/MOEF/Department of Biotechnology (GOI) and International funding be tied up.
- Development of literature including films, effective signage with basic information and professional guides for conducting the visits for the visitors.
- Coordinating with the Education Department for enhancing the level of participation of students/teachers.
- On the foundation day of the zoo visitors may be allowed without any fees.
- Showcasing the significance of Himalayan Zoo.
- "Concepts of Zoos as a window for conservation of species" may be included in school curriculum.

Group 'B' "Role of Zoos in Conservation"

Role of zoos:

- 1. Paradigm shift in zoo mandate- from exhibit to research and conservation.
- 2. Biodiversity showcase.
- 3. Conservation education.
- 4. Animals difficult to observe in wild can be studied closely.
- 5. Higher level of research
- 6. Conservation breeding programmes for endangered species.
- 7. Awareness programmes through education at all levels.
- 8. High quality of interpretation activity.

B: Constraints

- 1. Adequate and continuous funding.
- 2. Trained manpower.
- 3. Management models.
- 4. Lack of awareness at all levels.
- 5. Sharing of knowledge/ technical expertise.

C. Recommendations:

- 1. Steady funding for ensuring conservation efforts.
- 2 Dedicated cadre of people.
- 3 Donations (Corporate/individuals/ foreigners).
- 4. Networking of zoos, conservations bodies, individuals, NGO'S.
- 5. Training programmes at all levels.
- 6. Adoption programmes.
- 7. Successful models.

Evaluation sheet were given to the participants to evaluate two days training workshop followed by a valedictory function in the presence of Shri N.C. Bahuguna IFS, PCCF & CWLW (Wildlife). At the days end the participants were taken to Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary and the visit there was conducted by Mr. J.B. Chettri WBFS, Deputy Director of the park and ADFO Wildlife II.







Workshop on "Red Panda (Ailurus fulgens) Population and Habitat Viability Assessment: A species Conservation Strategic Plan for Red Panda

A PHVA workshop for the Red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) was organized by Rotterdam Zoo of The Netherlands, the Central Zoo Authority, and Zoo Outreach Organization of Coimbatore, India and was hosted by Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling from 26th – 29th November 2013, at Siliguri, West Bengal, India .The format of the workshop was similar to PHVA workshops conducted by the IUCN's Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (**CBSG 1993**). Major funding was provided by Central Zoo Authority (for Indian participants travel and stay for all). Workshop participants included representatives of three range countries – India, Nepal and Bhutan as well as from Europe who had either direct research experience, direct association with managing the species' habitat, or responsibility for education programs that would benefit recovery. The participants were divided into three group to facilitate discussion on three aspects Habitat of the species, Threats and awareness strategies with a vision for "Securing long-term viable populations of Red panda in the eastern Himalayan sacred landscape, by conserving habitat quality and connectivity, including requisite management initiatives, while maintaining socio-ecological stability for the region and promoting the value of the species"

The workshop had several steps to achieve the above stated vision where the three groups discussed on the following aspects based on the available data on the species

Update and describe range-wide distribution and status.

- Update information on habitat characteristics.
- Identify and rank threats.
- Out reach programmes as major awareness tool.
- Potential roles of ex-situ management

With goals in hand, each working group then began the task of identifying specific actions that would achieve those goals. These actions were intended to include important details such as the individual responsible for moving the action forward, a timeline for completion of the action, important collaborators, and specific obstacles to be overcome if the action is to be completed. The discussions by the groups on their respective issues involved population dynamics, conduct simulation models, estimate population extinction (range wide, special cases),define viable population size, identify stakeholders for implementing recovery, evaluate data on critical biological parameters, trans-boundary issues, develop outreach strategy and need for research. The groups drafted a report on the discussions followed with recommendations where each group based on the above issues framed goals and defined objectives to make it achievable.

GOALS:

- 1. To achieve /maintain viable populations of red panda by connecting fragmented population in the eastern Himalayan Landscape by 2050
- 2. Minimize the threats imposed by dogs, poaching and upcoming developmental activities.
- 3. Establish red panda as a priority species among communities, policy makers, military and paramilitary forces and ecotourism stakeholders through popularisation of red panda as a model of ecological and cultural value.
- 4. Ex -situ populations to contribute most effectively to species management in the wild.

Objectives for goal 1

- 1. Assess the current status of the red panda population, habitat contiguity, connectivity, suitability& identify critical areas or sensitive corridors by 2018 in the eastern Himalayan landscapes.
- 2. Improve and manage red panda habitats (corridors as well as habitats)

Objectives for Goal 2

- 1. Identify threats imposed (hunting as well as disease) on red panda by different type of dogs and formulating a dog management plan by 2018.
- 2. Curb poaching and other illegal activities leading to red panda mortality and enhance transboundary cooperation on these aspects.
- 3. Promote eco-friendly and sustainable development with minimal impact on red panda habitat.

Objective FOR Goal 3

- 1. Educate, sensitize and promote community participation to mitigate threats to the red panda and its habitat.
- 2. Develop a steering group for red panda in the lines of NTCA on a smaller scale to regulate, monitor and coordinate various agencies working for red pandas
- 3. To undertake assimilation of the baseline information regarding red panda resources physical, financial and intellectual in India and its neighboring countries
- 4. Enhance knowledge about red pandas among stakeholders across the Eastern Himalayas

Objective for Goal 4

- 1. **Basic behavioural studies on the ex-situ and in-situ population:** Behavioural observations of captive red pandas can be used to understand biology of wild populations and *vice versa*
- 1. Create a knowledge base for stakeholders (Zoo Managers, Protected Area Managers and Researchers as well as local people) and aid in further studies to evaluate, manage and improve the current population
- 2. **Better awareness and knowledge dissemination:** There are knowledge gaps where lay person or forester may not be able to recognize for e.g. a baby red panda, whereas a zoo keeper would have no such difficulty.
- 1. Share existing information on the basic biology of the species to enhance knowledge about the species in the local communities and the frontline staff. (Research biologists, better signage at the zoo, interpretation centers, visual aids, etc. with help from international red panda community)
- 2. Raise awareness for Red Panda through various publicity campaigns (booklets, post-cards, stamps, hoardings at strategic places, occasions like celebrations of environmental days like Wildlife Week, International Red Panda Day on 3rd Saturday of September, etc.)

3. Compilation of husbandry guidelines for red panda:

- 1. Compile and share husbandry and management guidelines for red panda including rescued cubs and making them available in local languages such as Nepali in West Bengal, Sikkim.
- 2. Synthesizing available information to meet local needs.
- 3. Develop and implement guidelines for veterinarians and keepers for proper care and handling of animals to minimize disease propagation (since many locally available traditional methods are seen to work or be practiced in this region).

4. Rescue and treatment of wild pandas:

- 1. Compile from local and international red panda community and share information on handrearing of wild, abandoned and orphaned cubs
- 2. Capacity building for frontline staff for tranquilization, capture, handle, transport, and other rescue and care operations.

5. Formulate population management plan:

- 1. Formulation of species survival plan for better management of captive stock to assist in-situ conservation
- 2. Update and maintain both national and international studbooks to ensure gene flow and diversity in captive population.

6. Translocation and restocking of wild population:

- 1. Identifying and testing potential habitats for soft release in the identified conservation clusters which can be developed where needed in time for future re-stocking.
- 2. Capacity building with concerned agencies including local participation for knowledge-sharing on the technical part.
- 3. Long-term monitoring of translocated / restocked animals using radio collars.
- 4. Seek corporate support to highlight Red Panda as a symbol of peace and harmony.
 - 7. Zoos and other organizations routinely conduct surveys of one or one PAs (genetic/population) to identify threats, population numbers, habitat status and genetic connectivity.

8. Opportunities for Zoo/Wildlife Veterinarians and Researchers

- 1. Policy interventions to create a separate cadre of wildlife veterinarians. Veterinarians have no incentive to work as zoo vetenarianss and are usually on short-term deputation from Animal Husbandry Departments or on contract basis; hence need is felt
- 2. Create opportunities for research biologists to conduct long-term studies on the wild/captive populations.
- 3. Zoos need well equipped research facilities to attract motivated veterinarians and zoo conservation biologists

9. Upgrade the status of zoo keepers as in India, by

- 1. Increase the minimum qualification of zoo keepers
- 2. Providing appropriate salary scales
- 3. Regular compulsory training on various aspects of husbandry locally, regionally, nationally and even internationally.
- 4. Regular Keeper exchange programme with zoos involved in global red panda breeding programme

10. Take up advanced studies with the research organisations for

- 1. **genetic studies** to understand genetic diversity in captive and wild populations and population structure in the wild.
- 2. **germplasm banking** recovery of testes and ovaries from recent post-mortem animals and develop protocols for cryopreservation, xenografting, IVF and embryo transfer.
- 3. **disease screening** for outbreaks of viral or bacterial diseases
- 4. **hormonal & behavioural studies** to understand reproductive status and stress

11. Organise funds for various activities

The reports from the PHVA workshop shall be a framework from which managers can develop habitat in such a way that it will help to meet the report recommendations. The final report will include population targets and habitat recommendations that can be used by agencies, organizations, and individuals to plan, justify, and guide conservation actions.

















♣ New adoption rates of Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park

Sl No.	Name of the Species	Adoption Charge (annually for each individual)
1.	Himalayan Tahr (Hemitragus jemlahicus)	Rs. 50,000/-
2.	Blue Sheep (Pseudois nayaur)	Rs. 50,000/-
3.	Markhor (Capra falconeri)	Rs. 50,000/-
4.	Himalayan goral (Nemorhaedus goral)	Rs. 50,000/-
5.	Red Panda (Ailurus fulgens)	Rs. 50,000/-
6.	Snow leopard(Uncia uncia)	Rs. 1,00,000/-
7.	Royal Bengal Tiger (Panthera tigris)	Rs. 1,00,000/-
8.	Clouded leopard (Neofelis nebulosa)	Rs. 1,00,000/-
9.	Common Leopard (Panthera pardus)	Rs. 50,000/-
10.	Tibetan Wolf (Canis lupus himalayensis)	Rs. 30,000/-
11.	Asiatic black bear (Ursus thibetanus)	Rs. 50,000/-
12.	Leopard cat (Prionailurus bengalensis)	Rs. 20,000/-
13.	Pheasants (exotic & indigenous) Himalayan Monal (Lophophorus impejanus), Kalij Pheasant(Lophura leucomelanos), Grey Peacock Pheasant (Polypectron bicalcaratum), Red Jungle Fowl (Gallus gallus), Temminck's tragopan (Tragopan temminckii), Cheer Pheasant (Catreus wallachii), Lady Amherst (Chrysolophus amherstiae), Silver Pheasant (Lophura nycthemera), Golden Pheasant (Chrysolophus pictus), Green Pheasant (Phasianus versicolor), Ring- necked Pheasant (Phasianus colchicus)	Rs. 15,000/-
14.	Birds: Blue and Yellow macaw (<i>Ara ararauna</i>), Red and Blue macaw(<i>Ara chloroptera</i>)	Rs. 30,000/-
15.	Birds: Hill Myna (<i>Gracula religiosa</i>), Rose ringed Parakeet (<i>Psittacula krameri</i>), Alexandrine Parakeet (<i>Psitacula euptria</i>), Grey turaco (<i>Corythoides concolor</i>), African Grey Parrot (<i>Psittacus erithacus</i>)	Rs. 10,000/-

♣ Adoption of animals and pheasants by different institutes

During the past three months the following animals and pheasants were adopted by different institutes. Boards have been put up in the respective enclosures mentioning the details of adopters.

Sl	Name of the species	Adopted by	Total	Duration
No.			No.	
1.	Female Red Panda	Pallishree Limited, Kolkata	1	November 2013 to October
				2014
2.	Male Snow leopard	Pallishree Limited, Kolkata	1	November 2013 to October
				2014
3.	Male Himalayan Tahr	Pallishree Limited, Kolkata	1	November 2013 to October
				2014
4.	Blue and Gold Macaw	Miss Chandrima Das, Himalayan	1	November 2013 to October
		Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling		2014
5.	Male Temminck's	Mr. Sandeep Sinha Roy, Data Search	1	August 2013 to July 2014.
	Tragopan	(P) Ltd. 187 Santoshpur Avenue,		
		Kolkata		











From the newspapers







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