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Forest
Touriosity

*Into
the
Wild*

*Types of antelopes found in the wilderness of Africa
Glimpses of wildlife from India*

THE BIG 5 AND MORE FROM AFRICA

Nagarhole



Ranthambore



Ghana



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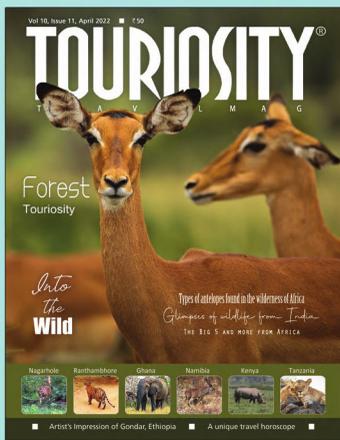
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Touriosity Travelmag
April 2022 Issue

Dear Reader,

If you would like to share your memorable experiences with us, please feel free to contact us with your write ups, articles, anecdotes, photos and others. Good pictures will be acknowledged and published in the Reader's Click section. For the Travel Humour section, you can send us any travel related funny photos or sketches.

For more about us, visit our website: www.touriositytravel.com and www.thetouriosity.com

Send us your feedback at: touriosity2012@gmail.com or ttmag.english@gmail.com

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COVER PHOTO:

A herd of Impalas, Tarangire, Tanzania

Photo by Grete Howard, Bristol, UK

The views and opinions expressed in the articles are solely those of the writers and contributors. Touriosity Travelmag is not responsible for any personal views expressed by the authors or contributors.



Forest issues of Touriosity have always been a favourite with our readers as well as contributors. Every time we bring a new forest issue we make an attempt to have it based on a sub-theme. This time the issue focuses on the various types of antelopes found around the world. The issue is very informative and well researched. It will help our readers to gain knowledge and insight. The issue also has interesting articles on the Big Five of Africa and Tiger Sighting in India. There is also a beautiful Photo Feature. An article on the Artist's Impression of Gondar in Ethiopia is also part of this issue.

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AN APPEAL TO TOURISTS

Forest tourism not only brings us closer to nature it also helps us see animals in their natural habitat. In order that we continue to get the chance to return to forest for the rejuvenation of the mind and body that they offer us, we must lay stress on conservation. Let us not destroy forests or harm any animals. LET'S BE RESPONSIBLE TOURISTS.

Forests have, since time immemorial, captured the human imagination and made them curious. This had led to the growth of wildlife tourism. Today, it is a multimillion dollar global industry. Many countries of the world, especially the African countries and some Asian countries like India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, are dependent largely on wildlife tourism as the major earner of revenue. This sector can embrace a whole lot of diverse activities, starting from eco-tourism to animal safaris, photographic tours to even game hunting. Depending upon the type and population of wildlife inhabiting the country, the condition of the economy and availability of infrastructure, one or more of these activities are made available to tourists and wildlife enthusiasts.

Touriosity is committed to bringing a unique theme every issue. Forest tourism is one of the most popular types of tourism and forest-themed issues have held a special place in our hearts from the very beginning. So this time, after a gap of a little more than a year, we decided to dedicate an issue to forest tourism. The issue doesn't really have a sub-theme, like our earlier forest issues; it focuses on the general sightings in the savannahs of Africa as well as the reserve forests of India. Both wildlife enthusiasts and general readers should find this issue very interesting.

For city dwellers an escape from the monotonicity of routine city life is essential from time to time. The flora and fauna of the wilderness beckon us and we often seek refuge under the starry sky. Hence the popularity of wildlife tourism keeps increasing. This issue is aimed at bringing the sheer beauty of the wilderness to your drawing rooms. As promised in our October 2019 issue (to dedicate an issue to antelopes), in this issue there is some emphasis on antelope varieties around the world. There are hundreds of antelopes and deer species inhabiting different forest areas in this world, especially in Africa and Asia. They beckon the wildlife enthusiasts and photographers alike. As readers flip through the pages, I am sure they are going to be awed by the sheer variety of this type of mammal that exists in the world. There's a lot to know about all the various antelope species and subspecies. If you are a wildlife enthusiast, or a photographer willing to capture the beauty of these species in your lens, you will have to travel to Africa to tick off a majority of them. But if you are not that ambitious, the good news is that even India is home to almost a fifth of all these varieties.

While not related to wildlife, our artist contributor Joaquin Gonzalez Dorao from Spain has, after a long time, shared his experience of an African destination. The Ethiopian city of Gondar and its medieval fortress and customs seem to come alive in his colourful illustrations and through the vivid description of his trip there.

Working on this issue has not only been fun and knowledge enhancing exercise for us, at times it has been incredibly engaging. It is amazing to know that there are so many species of animals from the antelopes family and to realise how little we know about each one of them. We at Touriosity are happy that we could compile them for you so that when you go for your long planned wildlife tour, you know what species to check out and where. Your feedback and advices encourage us to keep doing better. So, keep sending them to ttmag.english@gmail.com

Happy planning!

Rupanjana De
Rupanjana De

To make your reading through **TOURIOSITY TRAVELMAG** better, here's presenting a quick glance at the various sections and features in the magazine.



DESTINATION

It introduces the readers to various destinations in India with an emphasis on at least one destination from each region. It provides an in-depth information on the locations. In addition, there is also handy tourist information to help our readers plan ahead of trips.



AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

A travelling artist makes it to faraway lands and brings memories in the form of impressive water colour paintings. This section is a visual treat and interesting to read at the same time.



FEATURE

Here we bring to our readers an article based on the theme of the issue not necessarily focusing on travelling or travel information.



MEMOIRS OF A BACKPACKER

A new adventure every time in an entirely new place across the globe by a solo female backpacker. We follow the locals she meets, the unusual things she comes across, the surprises she gets and the problems she faces in her journeys with a backpack across the world.



TRAVELOGUE

In this section we bring travel experiences of one of our readers from popular places around the world.



GLOBETROTTER'S DIARY

This section explores the world of a globetrotter, whose passion is to travel, travel and travel more. It brings to readers unique facts and information from remote corners of the world.



COUNTRYSCAPE / CITYSCAPE

Here we introduce a new country / city each time. We bring to our readers facts and photos of people, culture, locales, tourist places, food and traditions of a country / city. Our aim is to take our readers on a magical journey of an unseen land.



PHOTO TRAVELOGUE

Here we bring to our readers a travelogue in photos.



PHOTO FEATURE

In photo feature, we cover the theme of a particular issue in photographs from one of our readers.



SNAPSHOT

This section is an ideal one for quick browsing. It provides interesting information from across the globe with a focus on the theme of the issue.



AT A GLANCE

A quick look at a destination. Here, we bring to our readers locations from the lesser beaten paths in otherwise popular touristy regions.



POINT OF VIEW

Here we bring to our readers useful articles with offbeat content. The idea is to give you the stimulus for thinking. It covers important issues that are in some way connected to travel and tourism.



ADVENTURE

We present here stories of unique adventures undertaken by our readers in some part of the world with a focus on the issue theme.



MOUNTAINEERING / TREKKING

This section focuses solely on trekking and mountaineering adventures across the world.

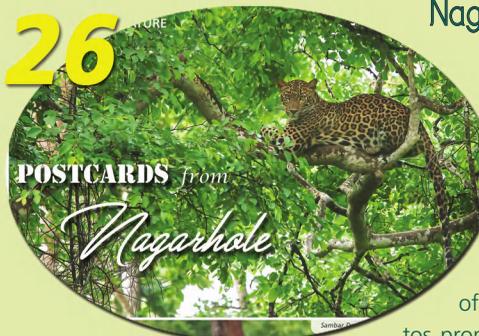


8 The Big Five of Africa

In Africa, the 'Big Five' refers to the five animals, viz. the lion, the leopard, the black rhino, the African elephant and the cape buffalo. Originally a term coined by the big game hunters in Africa, today the 'Big Five' attracts visitors and wildlife enthusiasts from the world over. This article explores the options available to tourists for sighting these five majestic animals in the savannahs and wilderness of Africa. Photo credit: Grete Howard.

90+ types of antelopes

Antelope refers to many species of horned and hooved grazing mammals that mainly inhabit the forest areas of Africa and Asia. However, contrary to the general understanding of the term 'antelope', there are actually a number of varieties of this group of mammals. In this master compilation we have provided to our readers information about more than ninety different types of antelopes. Photo credit: Grete Howard.



26 Nagarhole National Park

This is a photo feature by award-winning amateur photographer Sajal Ghosh. In these photographs taken at the Nagarhole National Park and Tiger Reserve in Karnataka, he has captured in the frames some interesting moments in the day to day life of the inhabitants of the forest. The photos promise to bring alive the forest scene in front of the readers.

Ranthambore National Park

Most of us Indians grow up reading about and listening to stories about tigers. With a desire to see them outside the cages in their natural habitat, we often visit the tiger reserves and forest areas across the country. But luck often betrays us. This is the story of a photography-enthusiast Paediatrician, Dr. Ranajit De, who made many trips to Tiger Reserves across the country until he finally sighted the Royal Bengal Tiger at Ranthambore.



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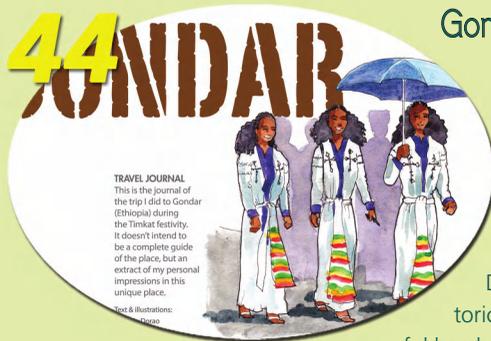
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Gondar, Ethiopia

Gondar is a city in northern part of Ethiopia known mainly for its 17th century Fasil Ghebbi Fortress, or the Fasilides Castle, which was once the abode of Ethiopian emperors. In this article, Spanish watercolour artist Joaquin Gonzalez Dorao has beautifully illustrated this historic city and its customs through his colourful brushstrokes.

Other articles

Touroscope, travel horoscope 32

DESTINATIONS IN THIS ISSUE





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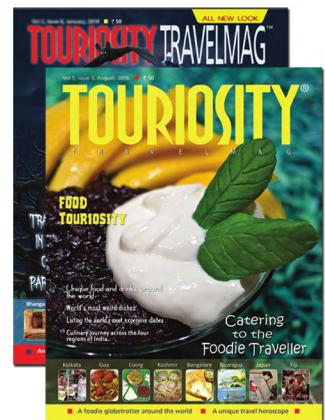
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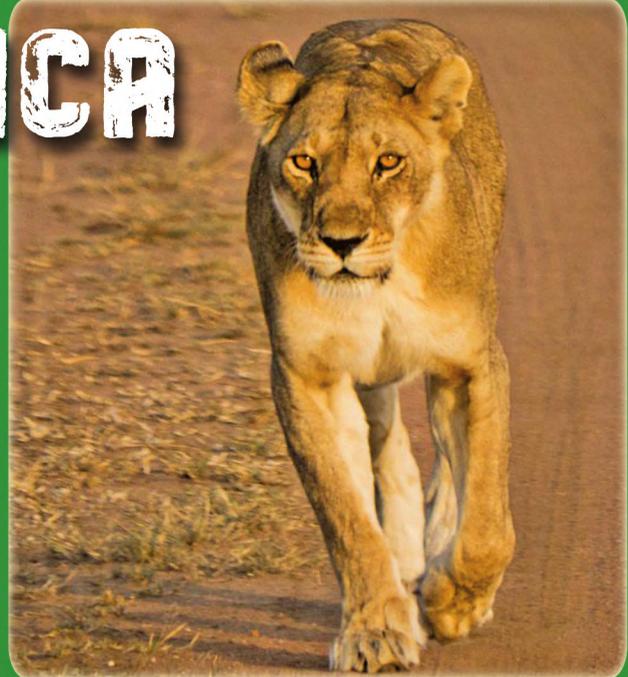
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The Big Five of

AFRICA



Photos by Grete Howard, Bristol, UK

For those who have visited Africa or are planning visit sometime soon, the term 'Big Five' is not new. It is one of the most commonly used terms in the safari industry, especially for marketing purposes. The term was coined by early game hunters to include the five species of animals found in Africa that were the most challenging and dangerous to hunt on foot. So for trophy hunters, hunting them was the biggest prize. Even today, in the Game Reserves across Africa, these five animals represents the highest safari royalty. So game hunters, who wish to have these prizes, will pay the maximum royalty, which in turn, goes to the conservation of these animals for future hunting and royalty. Now as for the ethics of game hunting, we will not go into it, as in this issue we are not talking about hunting at all. It is only about sighting these animals in the savannas of Africa and shooting them with the camera only. The Big Five animals also hap-

pen to be the most sought-after safari sightings. These five animals are: the African lion, the African leopard, the African elephant, the Cape buffalo, and the rhino (both white and black).

African Elephant

It is the world's largest and heaviest land animal; the heaviest recorded African elephant weighed more than 10 tons. At birth these elephants weigh more than a quintal. They have the largest brain in the animal kingdom but very poor eyesight. They also have the largest teeth; those are even larger than that of the Whales. Elephants are the only mammals that cannot jump. However, they can swim. They can live up to 70 years in the wild and spend up to 16 hours a day eating, thereby consuming up to 400 pounds of food and 50 gallons of water per day.



Elephants are highly caring social animals and live in large herds of more than 100 individuals led by a matriarch. They communicate using a variety of low-frequency rumbles that can travel for many miles. While the males leave the herd at the age of between 12 to 15 years to form bachelor groups and ultimately create herds of their own, the females usually stay with the herd throughout their life. These herds consist of family groups of grandmothers, mothers, aunts, sisters and daughters, the eldest of them being the matriarch. They have strong family ties, emotional awareness and uncanny intelligence. Female elephants can bear child from 8 years up until 50 years. Their pregnancy period lasts 22 months, the longest among all mammals.

An elephant's tusk grows throughout its life, growing an average of 7 inches annually. They can reach up to 2.5 metres and weigh up to 45 kg. They are used to dig for salt, water and roots, as well as activities like debarking trees, clear paths and fighting. Elephant skin is 3-4 cm thick except for skin on the ears that are the thinnest and softest. The hearts of elephants weigh up to 25 kg. The thick skin protects them from sharp thorns of the bush. Their enormous ears weigh approximately 20 kg each and measure 2m x 1.2m. Apart from hearing these ears also act as a fan to cool their bodies.

African Elephants are found almost everywhere in Africa (including the savannahs, woodlands, forest areas, grasslands and semi desert) except the very dry areas in the Sahara Desert [i.e. in 37 sub-Saharan countries]. There are two main species of elephants, the African Elephant and the Asian Elephant. The African Elephant has two subspecies, viz., the Savannah elephant and the bush elephant. The Savannah elephant is larger and darker than the bush elephant and are found in eastern and southern parts of Africa.

Due to huge poaching following the global demand for ivory during the 1970s and 1980s, the elephant population in Africa has dwindled sharply. Although ban on ivory trade has brought down poaching to a large extent, it continues to be a menace in areas with political instability. So the African elephant is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.

African Lion

It is the undisputed king of the African savannahs. In size it is the world's second-largest cat after the tiger. For those out on an animal sighting safari, lions are not easy to locate due to their nocturnal habits. They typically hunt at night, and sleep up to 20 hours during the day. This is why most safaris present sightings of sleeping lions.

Photos: The Big Five of Africa - The Leopard, the rhino, the African elephants, the lions and the Cape Buffalo.



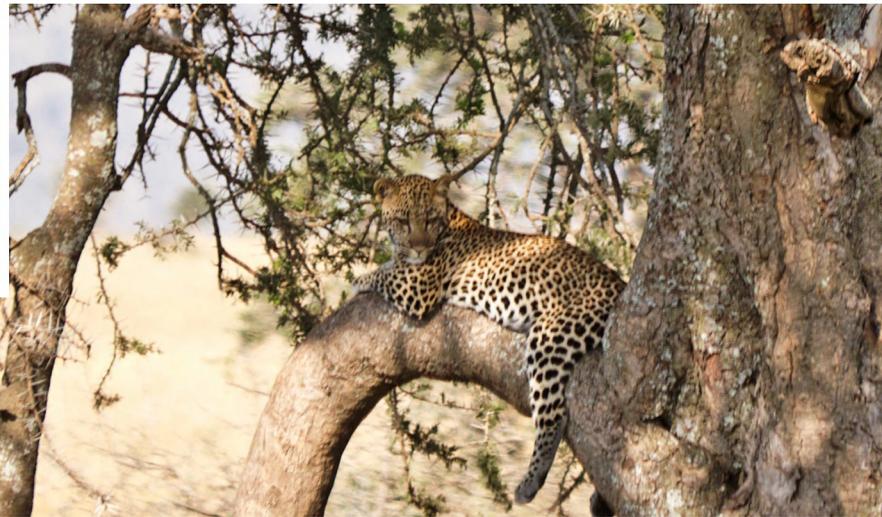


Lions feed on a variety of prey animals ranging from very small to huge; the latter are usually eaten by groups. While the larger animals are usually strangled, the smaller preys are bitten deeply in the head, neck or chest. Lionesses mostly kill their prey after a skilled stalking and camouflaging with the environment.

Just like the elephants, and unlike the other cats, lions are a social animal. They live in large groups, called the 'pride'; a pride usually consists of one (sometimes two or three) males, several females, and their cubs. The size of the pride depends on the availability of food and water and their territory extends as far as 260 sq.km. The female lions schedule the birth of their cubs in such a way as to help each other raise them. Interestingly, the lionesses typically do all the hard work like hunting. They often work together to bring down a large prey. They also do the caring for the young ones and protect them. The males protect their territory. After the females hunt, the males are the first to eat their share.

Lions can live up to 14 years and the males often die while fighting to protect their territory. Females live longer and are therefore more in number. They provide the continuity to a pride. Lion cub mortality is very high, and one of the biggest contributors to their deaths is being eaten up by new males in a pride.

The male lions are the only big cats with thick,



woolly manes. The colour of the mane changes with age, getting darker and darker. An interesting thing about the lion cubs is that they are born with rosette marks like the leopards, but they fade away over time. Lions have the loudest roar among all the cats that can be heard as far away as 8 km. The presence, location, condition and identity of a lion can be understood from the roar.

Lions were once found all over Africa, but today they occupy only 9% of their original home range. While the lions do not have any natural predators and lie on the top of the food chain, hunting by humans is a big threat that has landed them with the 'Vulnerable' tag on the IUCN Red List.

African Leopard

Leopards are the most secretive and elusive animal in the animal kingdom. They are also one of the most adaptable animals. African leopards are primarily nocturnal animals and prefer to live a solitary life. They are the strongest of all the big cats and have the largest territory amongst all big cats. Their eyesight and hearing are both very strong; at night their vision is 7 times stronger than that of a human and hearing is 5 times better than us. They are superb swimmers and can climb trees and run up to 58 km per hour. They can also leap up to 6 meters in length and 3 metres in height.

Leopards are known for the distinctive dark spots on their bodies called rosettes; these can change over time. The rosettes on the face of every leopard, their pattern as well as their relative position on the body are unique and this helps in their identification. In size leopards may vary from 1 metre to almost 2 metres. In addition, the tail is up to 1 metres in length. The females weigh 20 to 60 kg while the males weigh 35 to 75 kg. Apart from distinctive





calls, leopards also use their tail gestures to communicate with each other or display their mood.

Leopards do not generally hunt every day as killing a large prey can keep them fed for up to 4 days. They do not need much water and survive on the moisture they get from feeding on the prey. They generally kill more predators than any other carnivore. Of the big cats the Leopard also happens to be the most successful hunter. 1 out of every 5 of their hunting attempts is successful. If they are not sure about success of the hunt, they do not chase the prey beyond 50 meters.

An adult leopard consumes about 20 to 30 impalas in a year. Their incredible strength helps them to carry their prey up into the trees to avoid greedy eyes of the other predators or scavengers.

Rhino

Rhinoceros or as they are commonly called, rhinos, are a mammal with a prehistoric look. Rhinos have armour-like thick skin that forms inflexible plates over the shoulders, haunches, sides, legs and forehead. There are 5 rhino species in all, of which 3 are found in Asia and 2 in Africa. Here, we talk of these two only. The Black and the White rhino are found only in Africa and form part of the Big 5. In size and weight, rhinos are the second largest land mammals in the world, after African elephants. However, they have a much shorter height, with a short but thick neck and a huge head and horns on the nose.

Although the names seem to suggest that there is a distinctive difference between the two rhino species found in Africa with respect

to their colour, in reality, this is not the case. The two species have more or less the same skin colour, gray (and look more so due to their fondness for mud bath which usually leaves a layer over their skin). The 'White' rhino is a misnomer that originally came from the Dutch word 'wijd' (meaning wide) as this species of rhino has a very wide lip and accordingly named so by the Dutch. So the real difference is in the lip and the overall size. The black rhino is a hook-lipped species and is smaller than the wide-lipped white rhino. The black rhino weighs between 800 - 1,400 kg while the white rhino weighs between 1,700 - 2,700 kg. There are also differences in habitat, behaviour and food preferences between the two varieties. The white rhino, because of their flat broad lips, are comfortable in feeding on the grass. The black rhino however feeds on leaves, herbs, shoots and branches. The white rhino is much longer and has a convex back while the black rhino is shorter and has a concave back. The white rhino has poor eyesight and hence it needs its ears to stay alert; hence it has long, tubular and pointed ears. The black rhino on the other hand has rounded and short ears. As for behaviour, the black rhino is more aggressive and territorial. The white rhino are the most social of all the 5 rhino varieties and are also very vocal.

Human superstition and false belief regarding the medicinal value of rhino horns has led to widespread poaching in the last century. The horns fetched astronomical prices in the black market. Due to

Left: The African Lion, tree climbing Leopard and a herd of elephants - all part of the Big 5.

Above: The Giraffe, the Hippo, the Cheetah and Zebras - not forming part of Big 5 but very common sight during a safari in African savannahs.



Some of the most endangered and beautiful animals found in the African savannahs and wilderness, as well as those that have an abundant population there, do not feature in the Big Five. These include the cheetah, the giraffe, the zebra, the wildebeest, the hyenas and the hippo. On safaris these animals are a common sight.



the conservation efforts the animals are now protected. However, as against an estimated 6,00,000 black rhinos in the 1900s there are only about 5,000 remaining today. As compared to this, the estimated population of white rhinos today is around 20,000 individuals. So the sighting of white rhino is more common on a safari in Africa.

Cape Buffalo

The African Buffalo, also known as Cape Buffalo, are the largest sub-species of buffalo. They look like ox, with very large bossed horns. Cape buffalos are ranked in their herds based

on their fighting skills. They often have head on clashes amongst the males to determine rank in the herd. The hide on their neck can be as thick as 2 inches to protect them during these battles for dominance. Cape Buffalo are large reaching between 7 and 11 feet in length and 5.5 feet in height. They weigh between 300 to 900 kg and have 4 times the strength of an Ox. They are even known to kill lions.

African Buffalo have very poor eyesight and hearing but are blessed with incredible sense of smell. They also have exceptional memory. They are huge and moody and get aggressive if injured, often charging without warning. They are ambush hunters and kill more hunters on foot than any other animal. These reasons contributed to cape buffalos being included in the African Big 5.

Buffalo live in large herds containing hundreds of individuals. They move from one territory to another in search of better grazing grounds. Buffalo are good swimmers and often swim under water in search of better grazing. This way they can also avoid being preyed upon by the lions as the latter do not like getting wet.

When there is threat, a buffalo alerts the entire herd that soon forms a circle. The calves and cows (the females) are sheltered in the centre and the stronger males take charge of the outer ring. This often intimidates predators including a pride of lions. If necessary the buffalos can stampede the predators and hence this technique works in their favour. So lions generally prey on the Dagha boys (lone buffalos who are older and have passed their prime and hence separated from the herd), because they are weaker, older and living a solitary life with most of their time in mud wallows.

*Above: Wildebeest and Hyena
Right: Herds of giraffes, zebras,
elephants and wildebeest*





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Women have many roles to play in various arenas. Her place in society is punctuated with many tasks. While accomplishing such tasks she compromises with her love to explore the unknown. Kayaking through seas, relishing exquisite delicacies of various countries, experiencing deep water snorkelling or just seeing the world can be any woman's dream waiting to be fulfilled. Making such dreams come true for many women are the new era all-women travel services.

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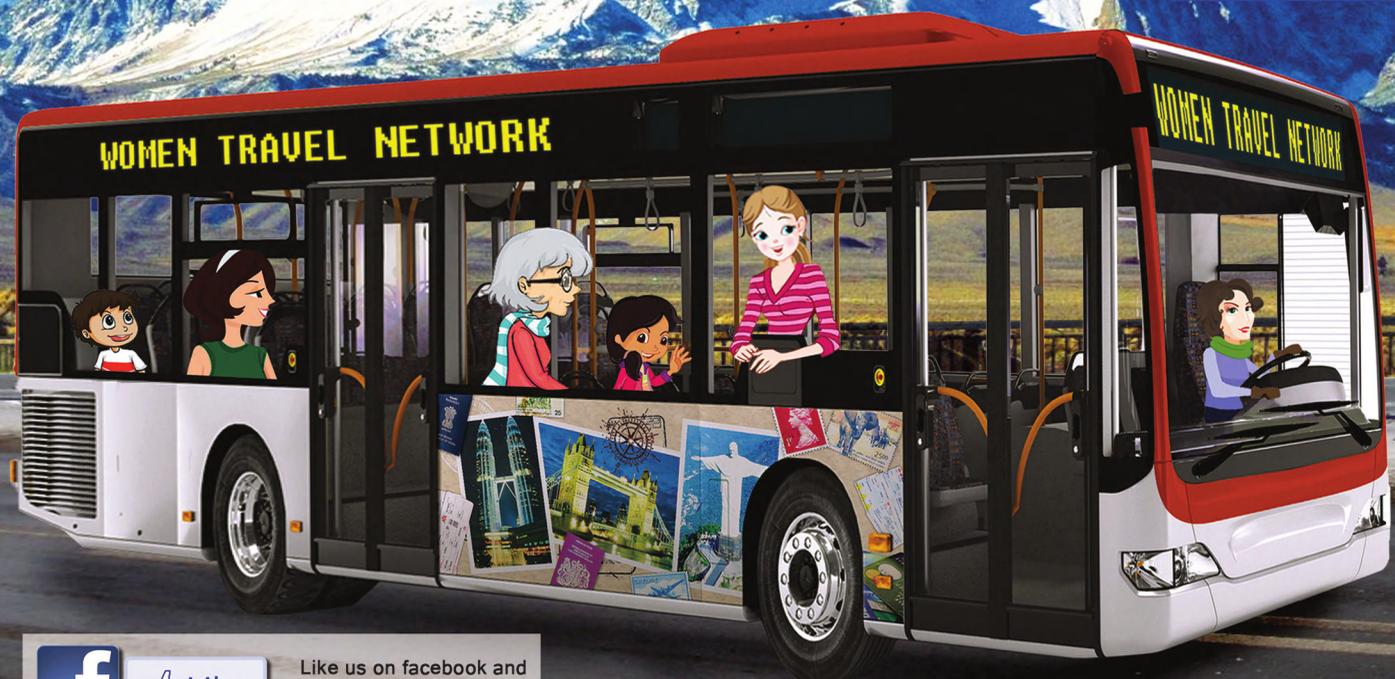
Why Women Travel Network?

Many a times, when your skin thirsts for a touch of mist or dew drops and your heart yearns for an escape far from the daily life routine or the load of work in your respective jobs, you start seeking for people eager to accompany you. You try convincing your husband or children to take some time out of their busy schedules, but many times in vain. At those difficult times, the Women Travel Network (WTN) gives you the grand idea to set out alone to evaluate the passion of you. Personal safety is a concern of these days, so maybe fearing to set sail for your

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If you have your own group of women

It is also possible to make your own preferred groups and Women Travel Network will take care of all the formalities of booking, ticketing and managing the tour. You just need to enjoy your trip and forget about everything else. So get geared up ladies and make your dream come true.

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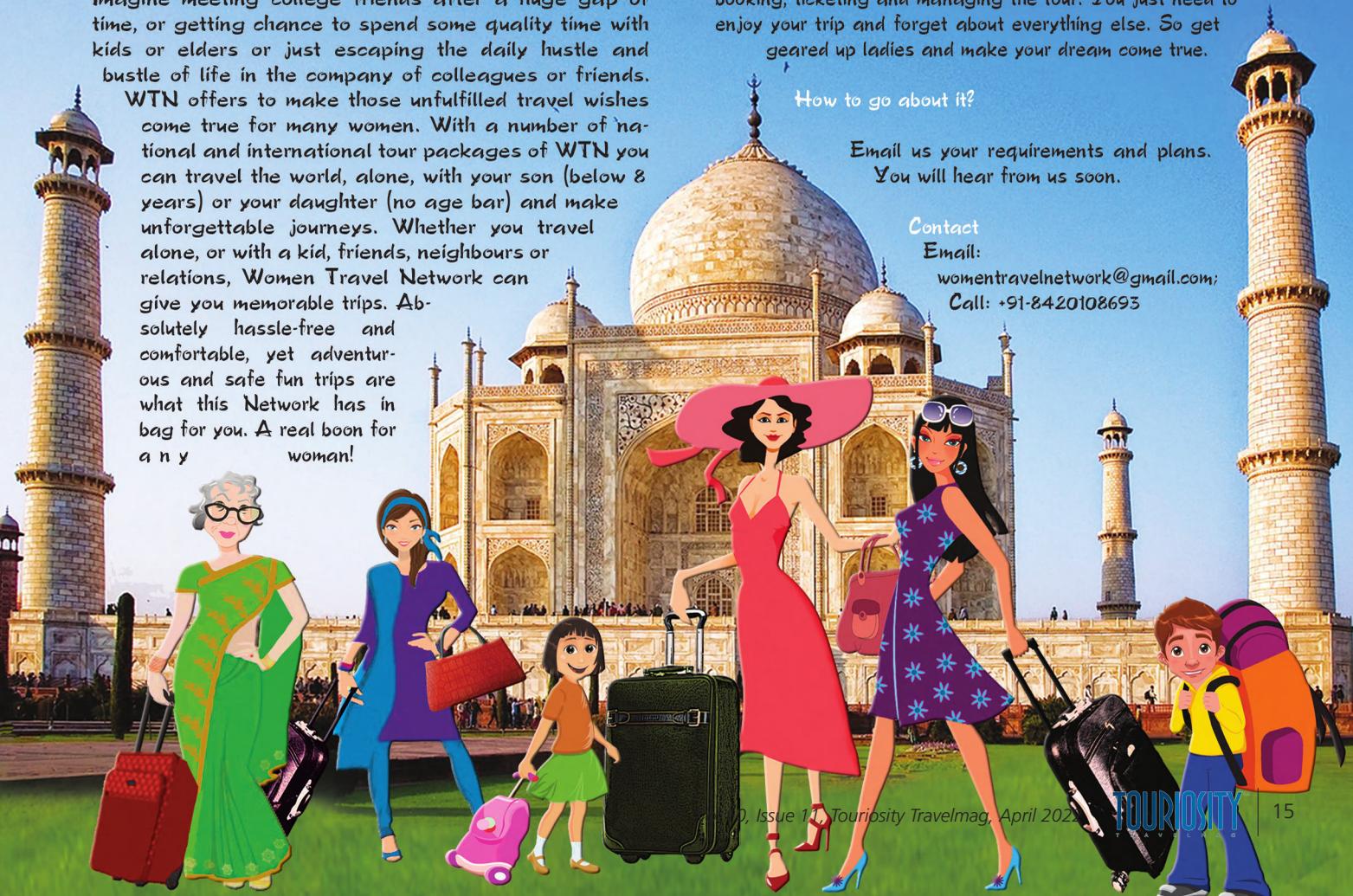
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91 varieties of Antelopes around the world

Photos by Grete Howard, UK;

*Anindita Datta, Kolkata; Arunaloke Bhattacharyya, Kolkata; Sabyasachi Chakraborty, Kolkata;
Subhankar, Mondal, Kolkata; Ajay Tharavath, Kolkata; and Sanghamitra, Kolkata.*





In our October 2019 issue, we had compiled a list of 41 antelope (and deer) varieties found across the world. The list, although exhaustive with beautiful photos, was not complete, but it received a lot of appreciation from our readers. So we had promised to bring another master article focusing on various antelope species. So this time, for readers interested in wildlife and photography, we bring this compilation of antelope (and deer) species around the world.

There are 43 deer species in the world. As for antelopes, as per the IUCN Red List, there are a total of 91 species and sub-species in the world. Out of this, however, three are already extinct (viz., Bluebuck, Queen of Sheba's Gazelle and Saudi Gazelle). That leaves 88 existent species on earth. Of these 74 antelope varieties are found in Africa and 14 in Asia. In this article we have dealt with many of them. However, we have provided

images of 58 antelopes and deer only. We have tried to include as much information as possible, given the paucity of space. [IUCN stands for International Union for Conservation of Nature]

Our list also contains some species of animals that do not strictly belong to the category of antelopes and deer but look similar and have similar habits. In fact, the term 'antelope' is not taxonomically very precise and the variety includes certain species like the elands and kudus which are closer to wild cattle than the other antelopes. Talking about antelopes and deer one must also note the differences between the two. The biggest difference is that male deer have antlers which they shed and grow back. Antelopes on the other hand may or may not have horns, which do not have branches like antlers. While the antelopes belong to the Bovidae family, deer belong to the Cervidae family. Deer are found on all con-

tinents, except Australia and Antarctica. The Barbary stag, or Atlas deer, is the only deer species found in Africa. It is a subspecies of the red deer found in North Africa and across Europe. The Barbary stag has antlers that are shed each year.

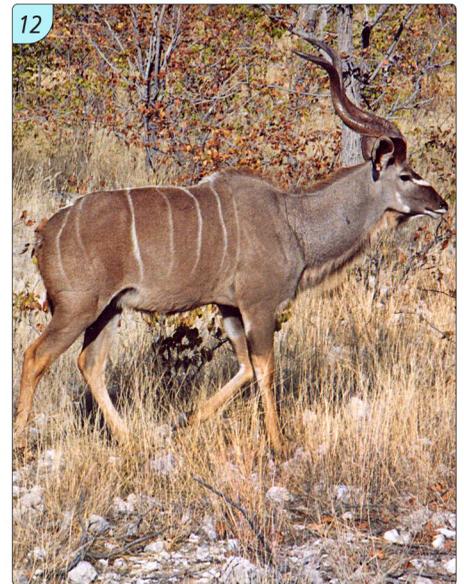
25 existing species of antelopes in the world are marked as 'threatened with extinction' in the IUCN list. Further, the population of 61% of all antelopes are decreasing. Only springbok and wildebeest population have been found to be on the rise. Five species of antelopes out of these 25 are said to be 'critically endangered'.

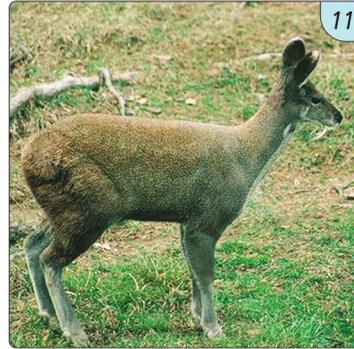
1. A pair of Impalas (pic: Anindita Datta);
2. A Gemsbok (pic: Grete Howard);
3. A Bontebok (pic: Sanghamitra);
4. The endangered Dama Gazelle (pic: Sanghamitra);
5. Coke's Hartebeest (pic: Grete Howard);
6. A Bongo (pic: Sanghamitra);
7. The endangered Saiga (pic: Sanghamitra).



1. A pair of Black bucks (pic: Subhankar Mondal);
2. Chousingha, the four-horned antelope (pic: Sanghamitra);
3. Chinkara (pic: Ajay Tharavath);
4. Sangai Deer (pic: Sanghamitra);
5. Chital or Spotted deer (pic: Grete Howard);
6. Sambhar Deer (pic: Arunaloke Bhattacharya);
7. Nilgai (pic: Sabyasachi Chakraborty);
8. A Nyala (pic: Sanghamitra);
9. A Roan antelope (pic: Sanghamitra);
10. A Sable antelope (pic: Sanghamitra);
11. Pronghorn (pic: Grete Howard);
12. Kudu (pic: Grete Howard);
13. An Oryx (pic: Soma Dutta Gupta);
14. A Springbok (pic: Sanghamitra);
15. An Ugandan Kob (pic: Sanghamitra);
16. A Waterbuck (pic: Grete Howard).







These are: the Addax, Hirola, Ader's Duiker, Dama Gazelle and the Saiga. They have been reduced to tiny remnant populations. The Scimitar-horned Oryx is already extinct in the wild and is found only in captivity today.

Antelopes are also found in the Arabian Peninsula (Dorcas gazelle and Arabian oryx), Russia (Tibetan antelope and saiga) and in India (blackbuck, chinkara, Chousingha, nilgai, and the Tibetan antelope). India however has many deer species, which are also included in this pictorial article.

A gnu is the bearded African antelope which is also known as the wildebeest. It is one of the most commonly sighted animals in Africa. A sub-species, the blue wildebeest, has a population of more than 15,00,000 individuals. However, it is not the antelope with highest population. Of all the African antelopes, the blue duiker is the most populous one, followed by the Springbok and Maxwell's duiker. Yes, by population, the Blue duiker (about 70,00,000 individuals) surpasses the most commonly sighted of all African

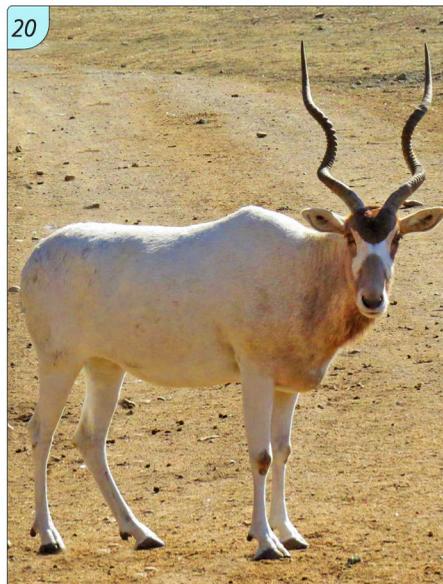
antelopes, the Impalas whose population is around 20,00,000. In fact, there are more blue duikers than the 3 next most common species taken together. The Blue duiker is a very small antelope found mainly in African countries like Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Of all the types of duiker, the blue duiker is the smallest. Talking about small antelopes, let us have a look at the smallest ones.

Royal Antelope, the smallest antelope in the world, is found in West Africa. It is as small as a rabbit and looks almost like a rat with long legs. It has large, round dark brown eyes, small ears and a slim muzzle. Compared to the Bates's pygmy antelope, it has a longer muzzle, broader lips, a smaller mouth and smaller cheek muscles. An adult Royal Antelope is only 10 inches in height at the shoulder, 16 inches in length and weighs 2.5 to 3 kg.

The Bates' Pygmy is the second smallest

antelope species and is also known as Dwarf Antelope and Pygmy Antelope. It lives in moist forest and bushlands of Central and West Africa and is also found in plantations, second-

1. A Bates' Pygmy (pic: Sanghamitra);
2. A Royal Antelope (pic: Sanghamitra);
3. A Red Duiker (pic: Sanghamitra);
4. A Hog deer (pic: Grete Howard);
5. Indian Mouse deer (pic: Grete Howard);
6. A Pudu (pic: Sanghamitra);
7. Dik Dik (pic: Grete Howard);
8. A Musk deer (pic: Grete Howard);
9. The Kirk's Dik-Dik (pic: Grete Howard);
10. Blue Duiker (pic: Sanghamitra);
11. Himalayan Musk deer (pic: Grete Howard);
12. A Duiker (pic: Sanghamitra);
13. A Puku (pic: Sanghamitra);
14. A Nilgiri Tahr (pic: Sanghamitra);
15. A Lechwe (pic: Sanghamitra);
16. A Giant Eland (pic: Grete Howard);
17. A Hirola (pic: Sanghamitra);
18. A Defassa Waterbuck (pic: Grete Howard);
19. Wildebeest (pic: Grete Howard);
20. An endangered Addax (pic: Sanghamitra);
21. A pair of Topis (pic: Grete Howard).





1



2



3



4

1. A mother and baby Hartbeest (pic: Grete Howard);
2. A pair of Klipspringers (pic: Grete Howard);
3. A pair of Fallow Deer (pic: Grete Howard);
4. Mother and baby Key Deer (pic: Grete Howard);
5. Bohor Reedbuck (pic: Grete Howard);
6. A Barking deer (pic: Subhankar Mondal);
7. The Bara Singha (pic: Subhankar Mondal);
8. Grant's Gazelle (pic: Grete Howard);
9. A Gerenuk (pic: Grete Howard);
10. Thompson's Deer (pic: Anindita Datta);
11. A Steenbok (pic: Grete Howard);
12. A Reedbuck (pic: Grete Howard);
13. A Bushbuck (pic: Grete Howard).

Blue Wildebeest, Western Wildebeest, Eastern Wildebeest, Nyassa Wildebeest, Cookson's Wildebeest, Black Wildebeest and so on.

In the sub-family of Hippotraginae or the grazing antelope are the Roan Antelope, Bluebuck, Sable Antelope, Common Sable, Giant Sable, Gemsbok, Fringe-eared Oryx, Beisa Oryx, Scimitar-horned Oryx and Addax. Amongst Impalas or the sub-family Aepycerotinae are the Common Impala and Black-faced Impala. In the sub-family Antilopinae (gazelles or dwarf antelopes) are Dorcas Gazelle, Slender-horned Gazelle, Red-fronted Gazelle, Nominata Subspecies, Heuglin's Gazelle, Thomson's Gazelle, Nominata Subspecies, Mongalla Gazelle, Speke's Gazelle, Grant's Gazelle, Soemmerring's Gazelle, Dama Gazelle, Springbok, Gerenuk, Dibatag, Royal Antelope, Bates' Pigmy, Suni, Cape Grysbok, Sharpe's Grysbok, Steenbok, Salt's Dik-dik, Silver Dik-dik, Guenther's Dik-dik, Kirk's Dik-dik, Oribi, Haggard's Oribi and other subspecies like Beira, Klipspringer and Western Klipspringer.

The Duikers belong to the sub-family Cephalophinae and include Maxwell's Duiker, Blue Duiker, Aders' Duiker, Bay Duiker, Peters' Duiker, Weyns' Duiker, White-bellied Duiker, Ogilby's Duiker, Brooke's Duiker, White-legged Duiker, Black-fronted Duiker, Rwenzori Black-fr. Duiker, Harvey's Red Duiker, Natal Red Duiker, Black Duiker, Red-flanked Duiker, Zebra Duiker, Abbott's Duiker, Yellow-backed Duiker, Jentink's Duiker and Grey Duiker.

ary forest, cleared areas and near human habitations. An adult weighs 2 to 3 kg and measures 20 to 22 inches in length. The tail measures 1.8 to 2.0 inches. Males have horns that are minute, black or brown in colour, stout and ringed at the base and measure 1.5 to 2.0 inches.

Dik Diks are one of the smallest antelopes inhabiting the bushlands and savannahs of eastern and southern Africa. They are found in places with sufficient supply of edible plants. They mainly eat fruits, berries, foliage and shoots, but not grass and they hardly drink any water. Their height varies from 12–15.5 inches at the shoulder, and length from 19.5–27.5 inches. They weigh between 3 and 6 kg and live up to 10 years. Female dik-diks are a little larger and the males have longitudinally grooved horns, 3 inches in length. Dik Diks have a bare black spot below the inside corner of each eye.

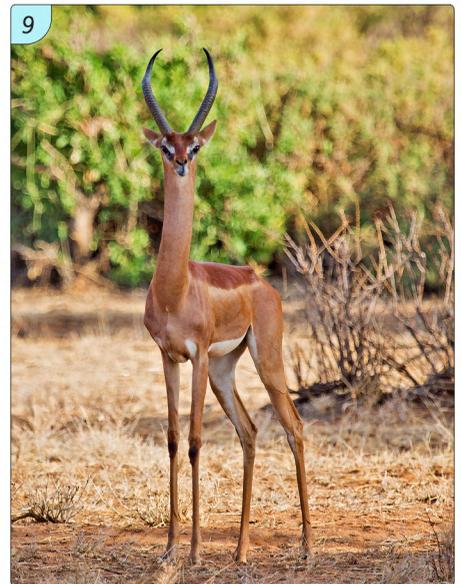
As compared to these, the largest antelope in Africa is the spiral-horned Giant Eland. Looking somewhat like cows, they range from 7.2 to 9.5 feet in length, 4.3 to 5.9 feet in height at the shoulder and 300 to 1000 kg in weight (i.e. as heavy as a small car). Giant elands are found in South Sudan, Central African Republic, Cameroon and Chad. The next largest antelope is the Common Eland which is a little smaller than

its giant cousin. Next comes the Bongo with a mahogany striped coat that is very difficult to spot. These nocturnal animals weigh up to 400 kg. The next largest is the Greater Kudu that is known for its beautiful, long spiral horns. It can weigh up to 300 kg.

Now let us have a look at the various sub-families of antelopes. In the sub-family of spiral-horned antelopes are Bushbucks, Sitatunga, Nyala, Mountain Nyala, Lesser Kudu, Greater Kudu, Common Eland, Giant Eland, Western Giant Eland, Eastern Giant Eland, Bongo, Lowland Bongo, Mountain Bongo.

In the sub-family of Reduncinae antelopes are the rhebok, reedbucks and waterbucks including the Bohor Reedbuck, Southern Reedbuck, Mountain Reedbuck, Kob, Buffon's Kob, Uganda Kob, White-eared Kob, Puku, Ellipsen Waterbuck, Defassa Waterbuck, Lechwe, Red Lechwe, Kafue Lechwe, Black Lechwe and Nile Lechwe.

In the sub-family of Alcelaphinae are the sassabies, hartebeests and wildebeests including the Common Hartebeest, Western Hartebeest, Lelwel Hartebeest, Tora Hartebeest, Swayne's Hartebeest, Kenya Hartebeest, Coke's Hartebeest, Red Hartebeest, Lichtenstein's Hartebeest, Bontebok, Blesbok, Tsessebe, Topi, Tiang, Korrigum, Hirola,





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PHOTO FEATURE

POSTCARDS *from* *Nagarhole*

Keeping watch

Photos by Sajal Ghosh, Kolkata

Sambar Deer



PHOTO FEATURE



Emphatic presence



Query



PHOTO FEATURE



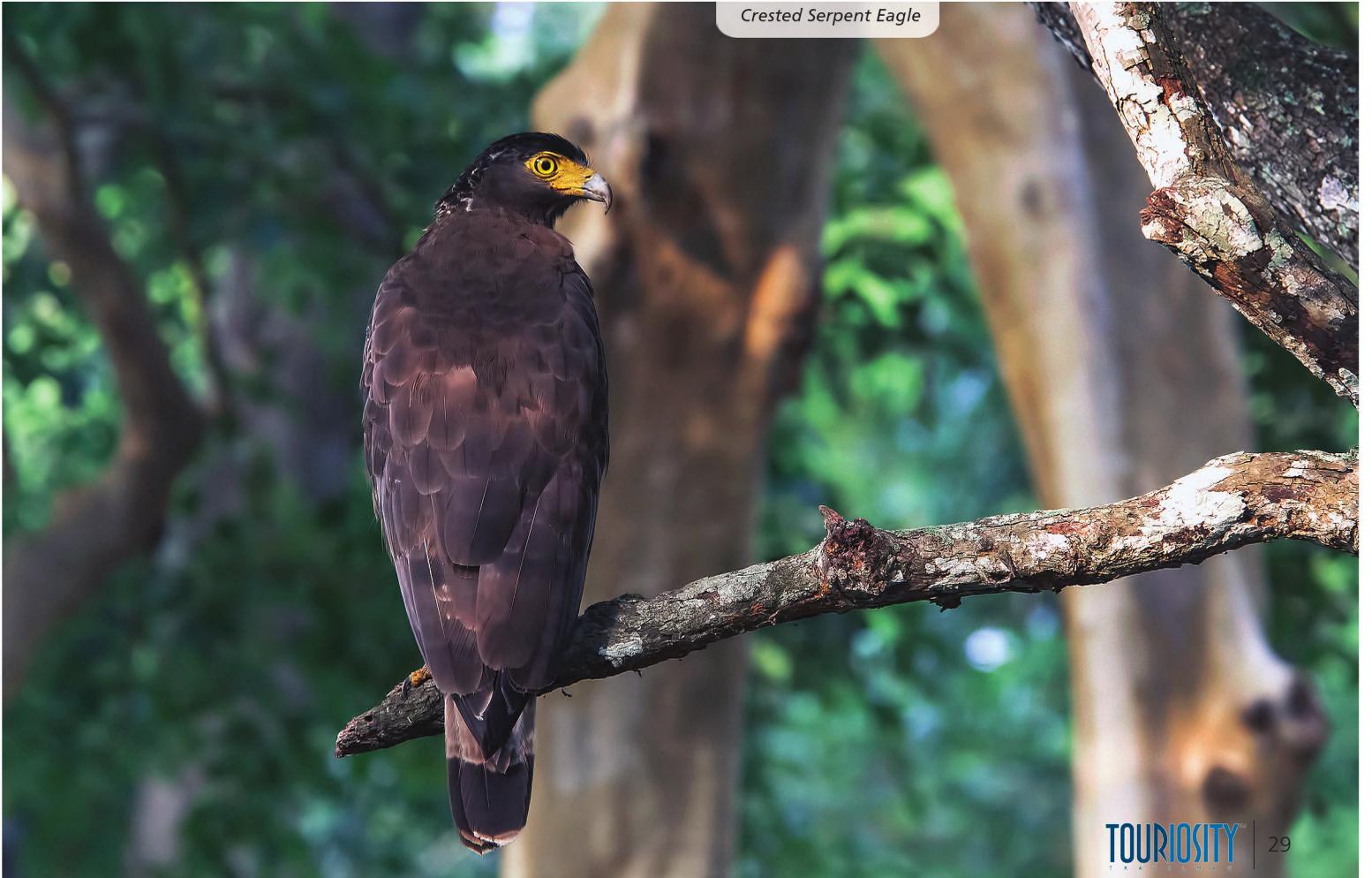
Strolling around



Indian Gaur



Dhole in its den



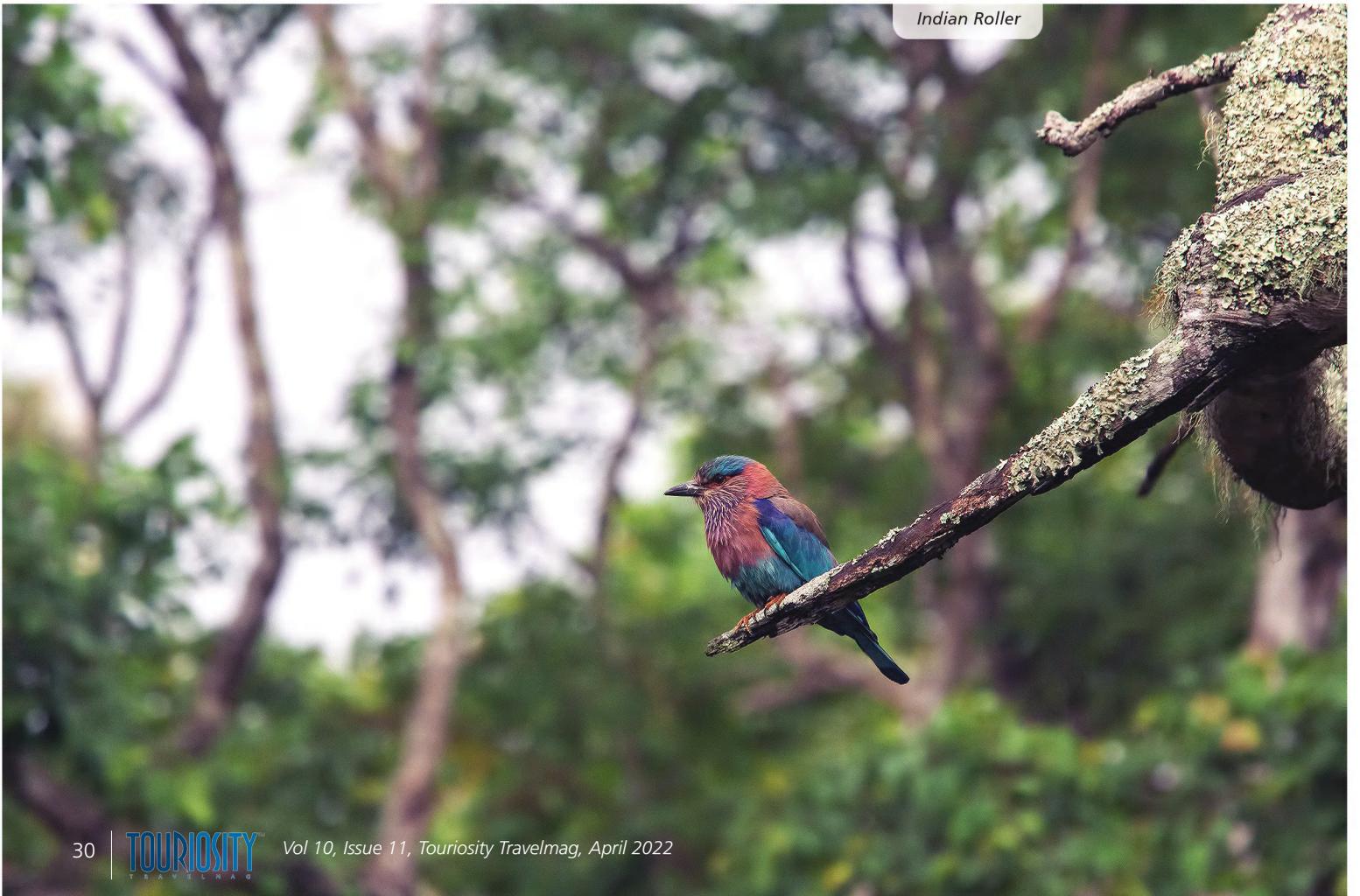
Crested Serpent Eagle



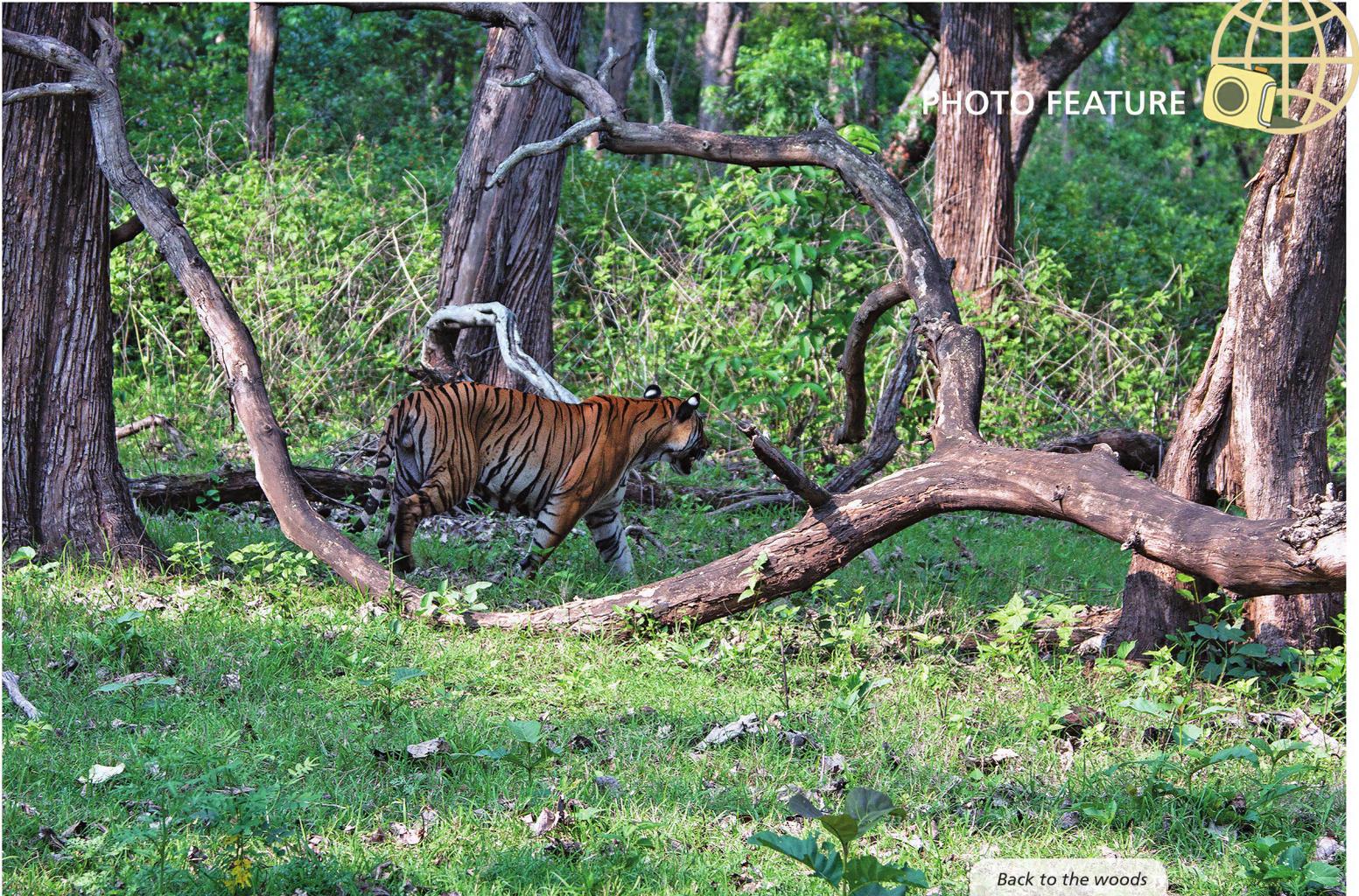
PHOTO FEATURE



Majestic presence



Indian Roller



Back to the woods

About the Photographer



Sajal Ghosh (AFIP, AFIAP), besides his role as a senior portfolio-holder in the corporate world, is an avid follower of photography. He loves to frame diverse moments of life, be it involving people along with their varied culture and contrasts or intensity of life in the wild. He has widely travelled across the world in his pursuit of framing moments of life, taking time out of his demanding corporate role. He has several 'Acceptances' and a few 'Awards' to his credit, received from various national and international salons across the world. He has also organized several solo exhibitions in Kolkata, since 2011. He recently, came out with a photography book titled "India in Celebration", presenting the colours of festivals and fairs of India, through which one can witness the diversity, fragrance and vibrancy of India in one go. www.sajalghosh.com



Aries

(21 March – 19 April)

This is the time of year when you are most desirous of change on a deep level. Romantic inclinations are also highlighted, as are any kind of celebratory, playful, and just-for-fun endeavours. Your physical health, as well as the relationship between your body and your mind, are in focus.

Places to visit: Austria - Austria boasts some of Europe's most varied museums and contemporary architecture, attractive and sophisticated cities whose bars, cafés and clubs combine contemporary cool with elegant tradition

Kalimpong - Many adventure sports like paragliding, river rafting, trekking and hiking are amongst the prime activities in Kalimpong.

Favorable Dates: May 3, 4, 12, 13, 21, 22 Favorable Colors : Yellow & Red

Professionally, it's not the best time for team work and other cooperative endeavors. It's time to carve your own path in life. Do your best to be in top form and make career adjustments. Romantic sparks occur in your life now. Avoid overdoing or overstating your intentions, or jumping into something blindly.

Places to visit: Belgium – It boasts some pockets of truly beautiful countryside in its hilly, wooded south and the flatter north. There are some very beautiful Medieval cities

Ranikhet - The pristine environment and amazing flora give Ranikhet a queen like status among the other hill stations of Uttarakhand.

Favorable Dates: May 1, 4, 10, 13, 19, 22 Favorable Colors : Red & Blue



Taurus

(20 April – 20 May)



Gemini

(21 May – 20 June)

Your personal beliefs may be tested now. Your impulses and faith matter, and all of the attention you've been giving to mundane affairs has you wondering when you're going to have some fun. You want to take a leap of faith now.

Places to visit: Bulgaria - Romantic National Revival era architecture is a particular draw, with Koprivshitsa, Bansko and Plovdiv foremost amongst examples of the genre.

Darjeeling - From the joyride in World Heritage Darjeeling Mountain Railways, visits to Buddhist Monasteries, Botanical Gardens to moderate hikes in pristine Himalayas and nature walks, explore the very best of Darjeeling

Favorable Dates: May 3, 7, 12, 16, 21, 25 Favorable Colors : Red & Blue

It's time to do something self-expressive, fun, and creative. You may be required to complete a creative project at this time. You are more stimulated by all that is unconventional during this cycle, and your ideas are original and progressive now.

Places to visit: Croatia - Be it backpackers or touring families, long-distance cyclists, yachters or spa-hotel surfers, island hoppers or luxury travellers, every type of traveller can enjoy much in Croatia.

Kodaikanal – Sight seeing places to see are, The beautiful Coaker's Walk, Kuriñji Andavar Temple - dedicated to Lord Murugan, and a several famous picnic spots like the Bear Shola Falls, Green Valley View and Pillar Rocks.

Favorable Dates: May 1, 4, 10, 13, 19, 20 Favorable Colors : Blue & Grey



Cancer

(21 June – 22 July)



Leo

(23 July – 22 August)

This is a favorable time for learning something new, feeling at ease in social situations, taking and developing a mental rapport with others. If a romance were to begin during this time frame, it would be characterized by a strong feeling of camaraderie.

Places to visit: Czech Republic - Encompassing the forests and rolling countryside of Bohemia, Moravia's spectacular karst region and historic towns like Olomouc and Český Krumlov.

Lakshadweep - To explore three beautiful reefs, 5 submerged banks, its mosques, villages and much more, explore Lakshadweep's marine life by indulging in adventure activities

Favorable Dates: May 3, 4, 12, 13, 21, 22 Favorable Colors : Yellow & Grey

This can be an invigorating period. A new approach to friendships or new friendships altogether, a new path towards happiness and fulfilment are in store for you. You enjoy talking about what interests you, and you find great value in the exchange of ideas.

Places to visit: Cyprus - Dazzling beaches, shimmering blue seas, endless summers and tables groaning under heaped platters of mezé and bottles of sweet chilled wine

Shillong - The picturesque surrounding and salubrious weather adds on to the beauty of hill station. The lush greenery of the place will make you enjoy like never before.

Favorable Dates: May 4, 8, 13, 17, 22, 26 Favorable Colors : Red & White



Virgo

(23 August – 22 Sept)

Manish Kumar Arora is a renowned KP Astrologer, Numerologist, Tarot Reader and Vastu Consultant. He will be with Touriosity Travelmag to bring to our readers monthly predictions based on zodiac signs with special emphasis on travel predictions. Our readers can plan their tours accordingly. He can be reached at manish@manishastrologer.com



You may find yourself in a position in which there is a blending of the financial with social or public affairs. Your ability to grasp unusual subjects matter and to intuitively understand what others are trying to say win you some brownie points

Places to visit: Turkey - From grand Classical cities to hilltop fortresses and remote churches, a vast number of graceful Islamic monuments, as well as intriguing city bazaars the tour would be worth its value.

Goa - The land of sand and sun, Goa is an amalgamation of colonial wonders, architecture, beaches, and the majestic forts.

Favorable Dates: May 7, 8, 16, 17, 25, 26 Favorable Colors : Green & White

This month presents stellar opportunities for partnerships, negotiations, and positive reinforcement in general. This is a time when you can recharge your batteries and close matters that have run their natural course.

Places to visit: Ireland - Whether spending the night in an majestic ancient castle, cycling along a scenic coastal headland or viewing celtic artifacts at a world-class museum, Ireland casts a spell of enchantment on every visitor.

Odisha - The ancient temples are more than an association with religious beliefs; their architectural splendor reflects the skills possessed by the artisans of the land in the bygone era.

Favorable Dates: May 1, 3, 10, 12, 19, 21 Favorable Colors : Yellow & Red



You are more motivated to make money now. At the root of this is likely to be a quest for a sense of personal freedom. You prefer to lead a group rather than follow during this period.

Places to visit: Japan - Sensoji Temple is one of its iconic historical sites, and the Imperial Palace provides a traditional and royal air. Furthermore, the city's Ginza, the equivalent of New York's Madison Avenue, is a great attraction; so is Mount Fuji.

Nainital - The look of the surrounding landscape recalls aspects of Britain, with the steep walls of the town's valley covered in oaks and pines.

Favorable Dates: May 2, 7, 11, 16, 20, 25 Favorable Colors : Blue & Green



This is an excellent time for presenting your ideas or asking for what you want. You're at your best when you are showing the world your practical, competent, and responsible side. Strong opportunities for enhancing or attracting a close partnership occur now.

Places to visit: Belgium - Visit Brussels, the self-proclaimed "Capital of Europe," and wander around the magnificent Grande Place. See great museums such as the Magritte, dedicated to Belgium's famous surrealist painter.

Ooty - From Stone House to Botanical Garden and Ooty Lake to Nilgiri Mountain Railway, the vintage feel is alive in Ooty till date.

Favorable Dates: May 2, 8, 11, 17, 20, 26 Favorable Colors : Blue & Yellow



You are more willing than usual to explore life's secrets. This period brings greater in-depth understanding and an inclination to delve beneath the surface of matters to get to the bottom of them.

Places to visit: Sweden - Uppsala, a cathedral city with botanical gardens and ancient burial mounds, and Sigtuna, widely thought to be Sweden's oldest town. Its medieval centre is a charming spot for shopping and slurping coffee.

Mahabaleshwar - It features several elevated viewing points, such as Arthur's Seat. West of here is centuries-old Pratapgarrh Fort, perched atop a mountain spur.

Favorable Dates: May 3, 8, 12, 17, 21, 26 Favorable Colors : Purple & White



Energies thrown toward recreation, travel, or just cooking up great new ideas are well spent and serve to refresh and renew your vitality. Creative projects can flourish with enlarged focus and redoubled efforts that somehow don't tire you out..

Places to visit: Denmark - The Danish Riviera, the Land of Light, the home of fairy tales, Aarhus is frequently named as one of the happiest cities on Earth and you'll see why when you visit.

Munnar - A hill station and former resort for the British Raj elite, it's surrounded by rolling hills dotted with tea plantations established in the late 19th century.

Favorable Dates: May 1, 6, 10, 15, 19, 24 Favorable Colors : Yellow & Purple





In search of the

ELUSIVE TIGER



*Article and photos by
Dr. Ranajit De, Kolkata*

We have all read stories about tigers in our childhood. We have also seen tigers engaged in zoological parks. But our ever longing thirst to see the ferocious animal in its own natural habitat draws us to the numerous tiger reserve forests across the country. In the last few years we have been to many reserve forests like the Kanha Tiger Reserve, the Panna National Park, the Jim Corbett National Park and also the Sundarban National Park. But we were never successful in viewing tigers in any of the safaris in these parks except in Kanha where we had had just one sighting but that too from a great distance.

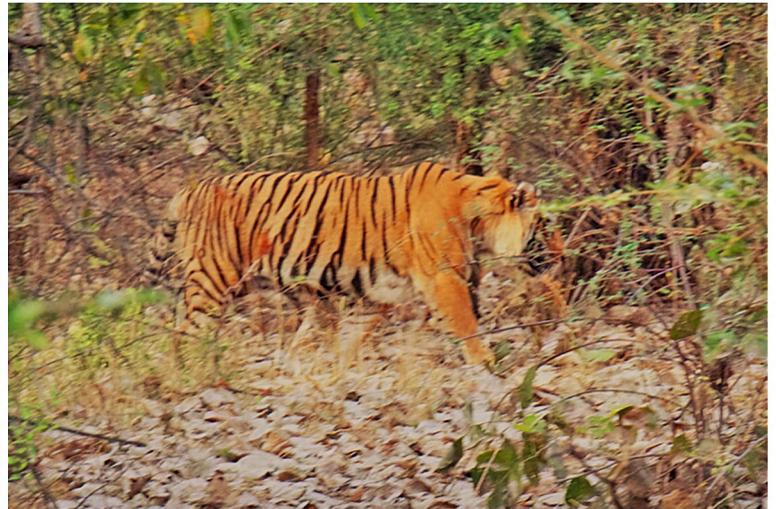
This year after attending a Paediatric Conference at Noida we planned a trip to Jaipur and the Ranthambhore Reserve forest. As we were not very much sure of tiger sightings, we booked only two Canter safaris, the rate for which was Rs. 900/- per person. There was another option, to take a Maruti Gypsy safari, the rate for which was Rs. 1700/- per person.

Day 1

On the day of our first safari (in Zone 2A) as we entered the forest through the gate of the forest reserve, our canter driver gave us a washroom break. This area was interesting as it was also the entrance of the Ranthambhore fort. The construction of the fort was started in 944 AD by the Chauhan kings. Later it was occupied by numerous rulers.

Here we were greeted by our guide who briefed us about the DOs and DON'Ts of the jungle safari such as not getting down from the vehicle, not taking any food during the safari, not throwing any garbage outside the vehicle and so on.

After the briefing began the real jungle safari in the buffer area (118 sq. km) which was to last for three hours. It may be noted that no safari is allowed in the core area (274 sq. km). The total



area of the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve is 392 sq. km.

Soon after we started, on the way we saw a small crocodile cub on a rock in the water. Our canter moved along the dusty roads of the forest. We also saw numerous spotted deer, nilgai, sambar, peacock and many birds. The beauty of peacocks roaming around in the natural environment is beyond description. The sight of deer calves running about in the forest made us feel like picking up one and caressing it for a while. But such things are not possible in reserve forests, nor recommended.

A mongoose crossed our path and our guide said that it is a good sign. We crossed our fingers. As all other animals could be sighted in plenty, our guide suggested that we would try to locate the tiger first. It should be mentioned here that Ranthambhore forest is a jungle area where no radio collar devices are used for tracking tigers. However, there are some instances of tiger tracking by using radio collar as in the case of Tiger Ustad (T-24) after he was in the

news for killing a forest guard; however, he was subsequently transferred to Kanha. So, in Ranthambhore, tigers cannot be normally located using any sophisticated technology. Tigers can be located from 'panic calls' of deer and monkeys and from their pug marks during the rainy season.

While we waited for any signals, we learnt many things from the guide. The tiger is a territorial animal and has its own roaming ground. A tiger or tigress makes territorial demarcation of its own area by urinating on the border so that any other tiger does not encroach upon the area. Sighting a tiger in a reserve forest is not something that can be guaranteed; everything depends on the tiger's will.

A vehicle that was ahead of us alerted us on the probable location. Reaching there we found that many canters and gypsies had already gathered around. Most people had kept their tele-lenses ready for the moment when the mighty animal would move out of the bushes. We craned our necks and finally saw the tiger's back; it was half submerged

in a river just beside slope of a hill.

As we kept our eyes pinned on him, from time to time he moved his head as if trying to figure out how many visitors had arrived to see him. We had to wait patiently for about an hour before the tiger finally moved his body. Cameras clicked and we saw the royal gait of the tiger moving into the forest. It was a memorable moment for us. We were all very excited.

As the tiger changed its location we also moved away towards the forest. Then again we saw the full view of the majestic animal but unfortunately we couldn't photograph it because there were many vehicles in front of us.

Photos:

Opposite Page: The elusive Royal Bengal Tiger lazing about

Above: Spotting the spotted deer, a freely roaming peacock and the majestic king of the jungle, the tiger.



The scheduled time for the end of the safari was nearing; it was time to return home. On the way back, we saw a bear and an owl in their natural habitat. It was a different feeling and I realized that wild animals in natural habitat look as beautiful as babies in their mother's lap.

Day 2

Our safari next morning was in Zone 8. We learnt that this zone is smaller in comparison to the other zones, thus making it very difficult to sight a tiger.

But good luck prevailed on us once again; a tiger was spotted by us shortly after entering the forest. But we saw it from quite a distance. Somewhat obscure behind the bushes, resting in the shade of a tree in the scorching sun was this female tiger, little smaller in size than the previous day's one. Nonetheless, we were satisfied. The visit to this reserve forest had been successful for us in so far as sighting tigers is concerned.

In an endnote I would like to pass on this message to all tourists and wildlife lovers. We must have a genuine love and respect for wildlife and their natural wild environment. Only then the natural ecological balance will be maintained; otherwise our own existence will be in doubt.



Photos: A gray langur with its babies, a Sambar deer and an owl



About the Author



Dr. Ranajit De is a Kolkata-based Paediatrician attached to the West Bengal Health Services. He is inclined towards social service and since the beginning of his career he has served as a doctor in very remote areas in the state including the Sundarban area. He loves to travel and often sets off with family to explore various corners of the country. He also has a special interest in wildlife photography and has participated in a few exhibitions.

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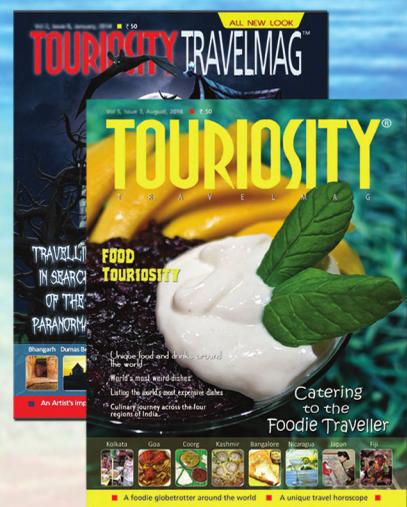
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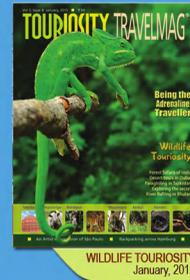
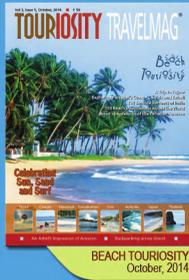
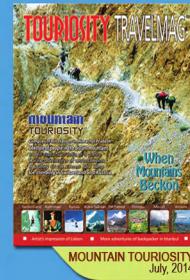
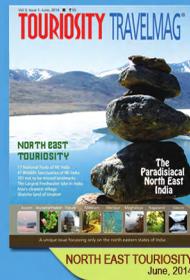
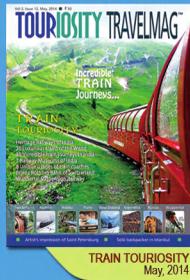
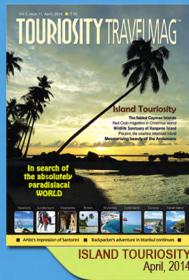
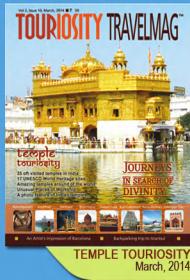
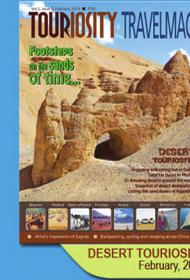
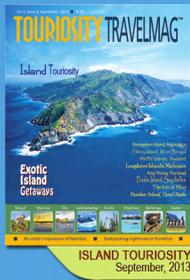
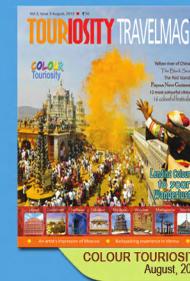
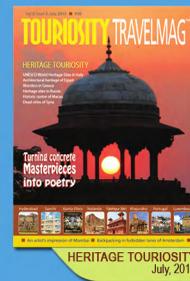
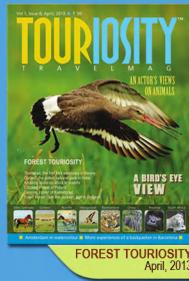
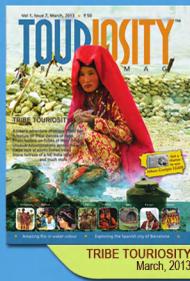
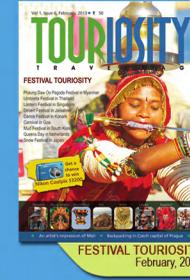
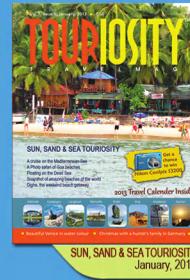
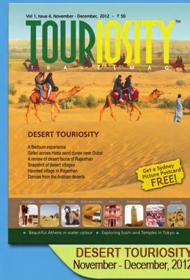
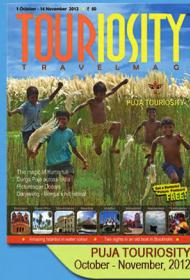


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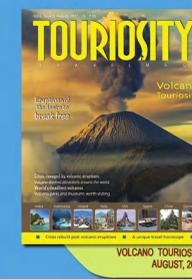
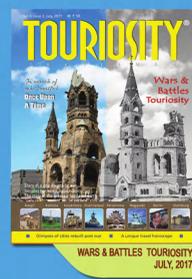
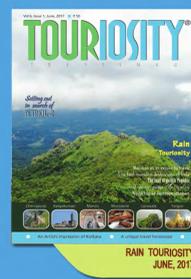
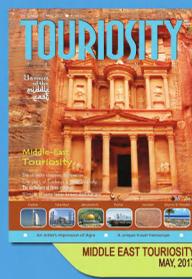
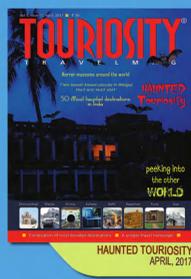
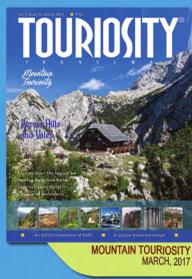
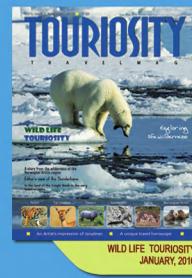
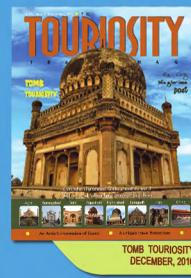
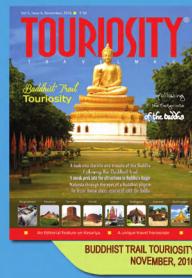
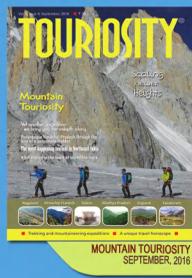
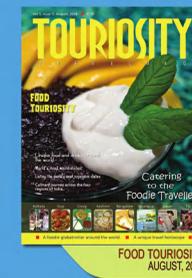
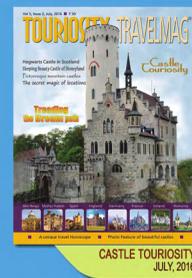
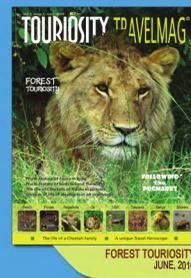
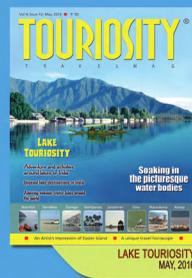
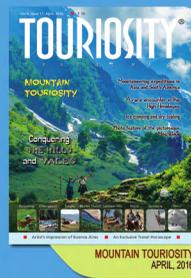
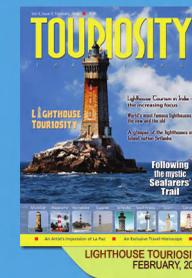
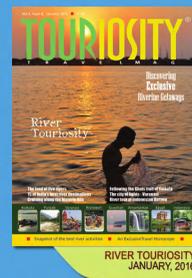
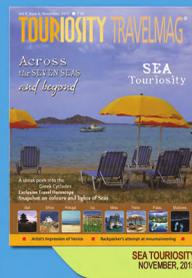
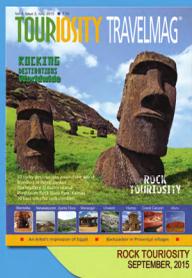
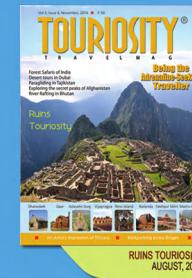
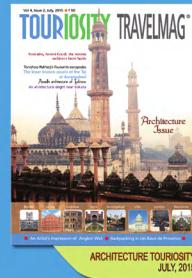
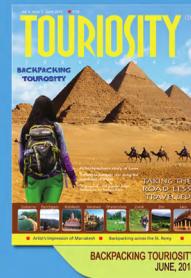
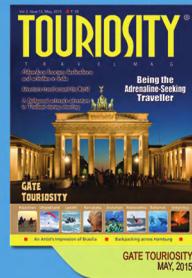
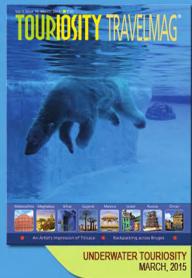
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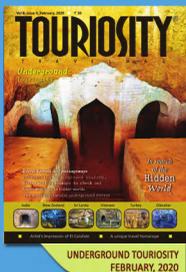
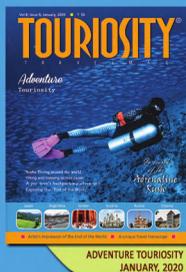
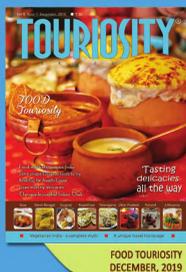
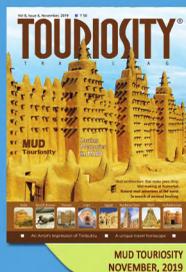
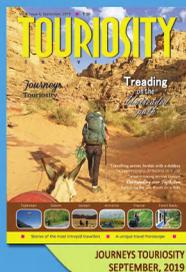
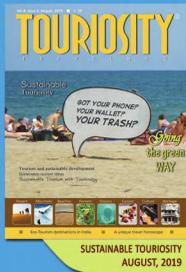
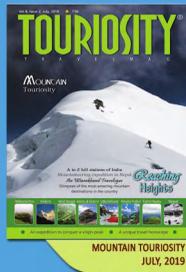
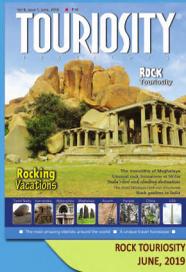
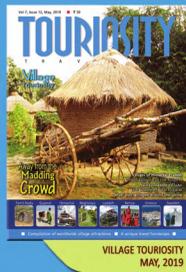
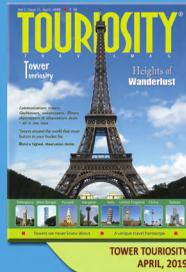
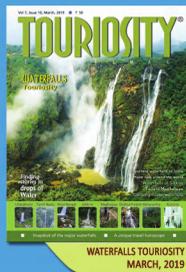
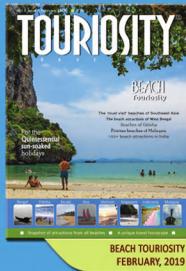
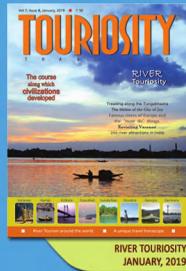
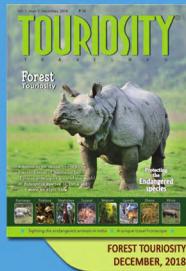
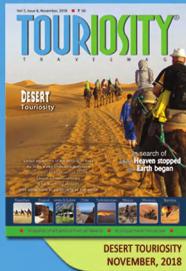
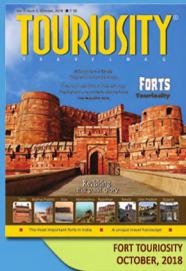
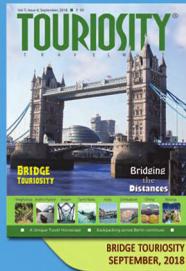
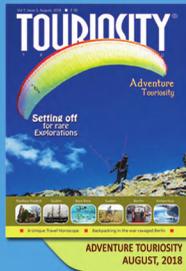
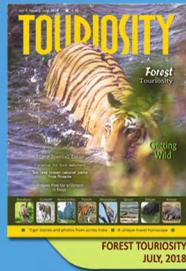
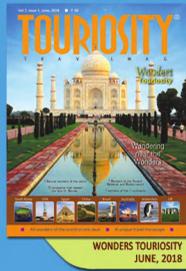
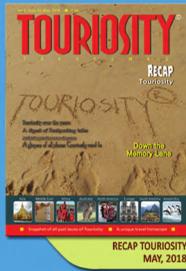
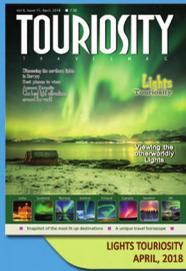
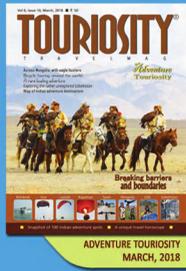
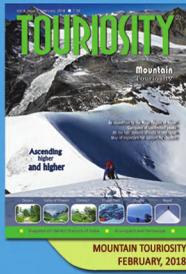
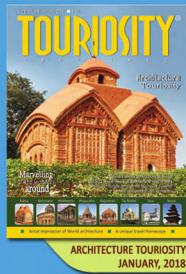
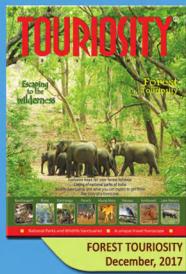
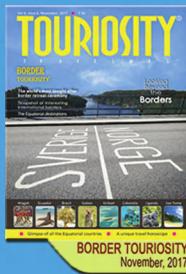
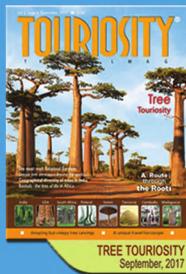


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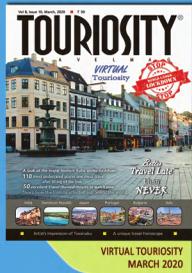
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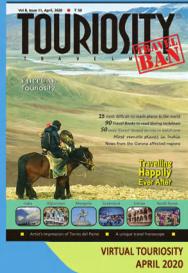
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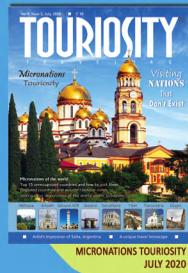
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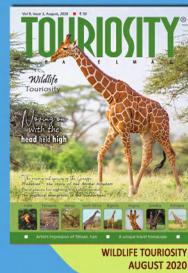
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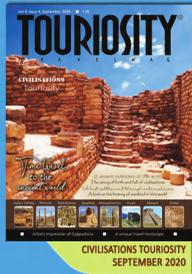
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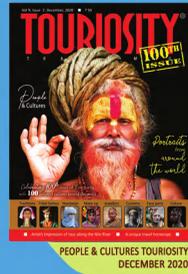
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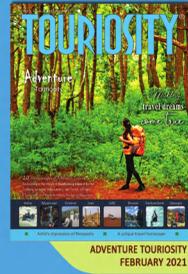
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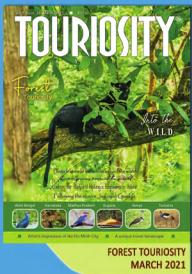
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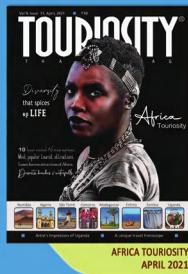
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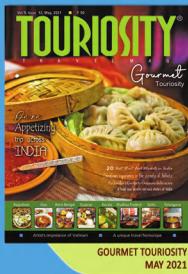
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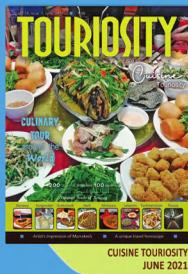
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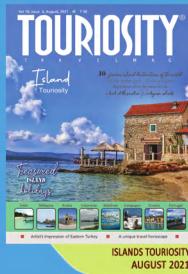
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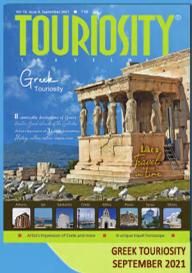
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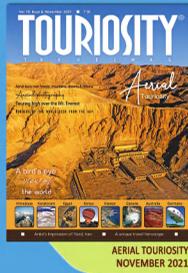
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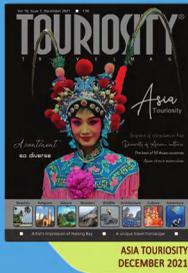
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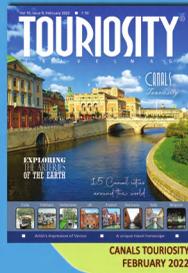
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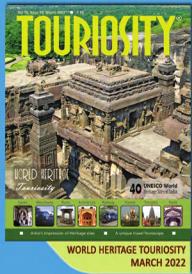
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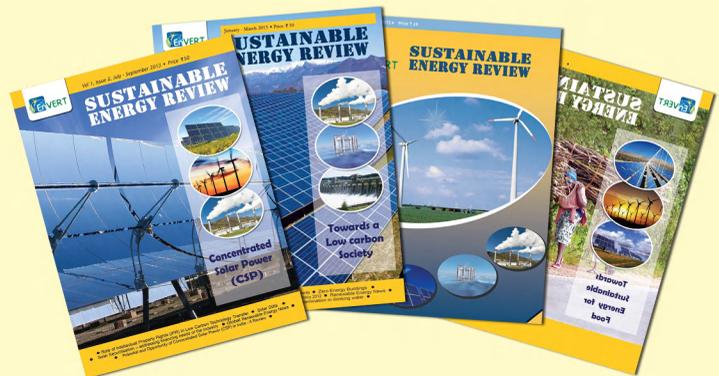
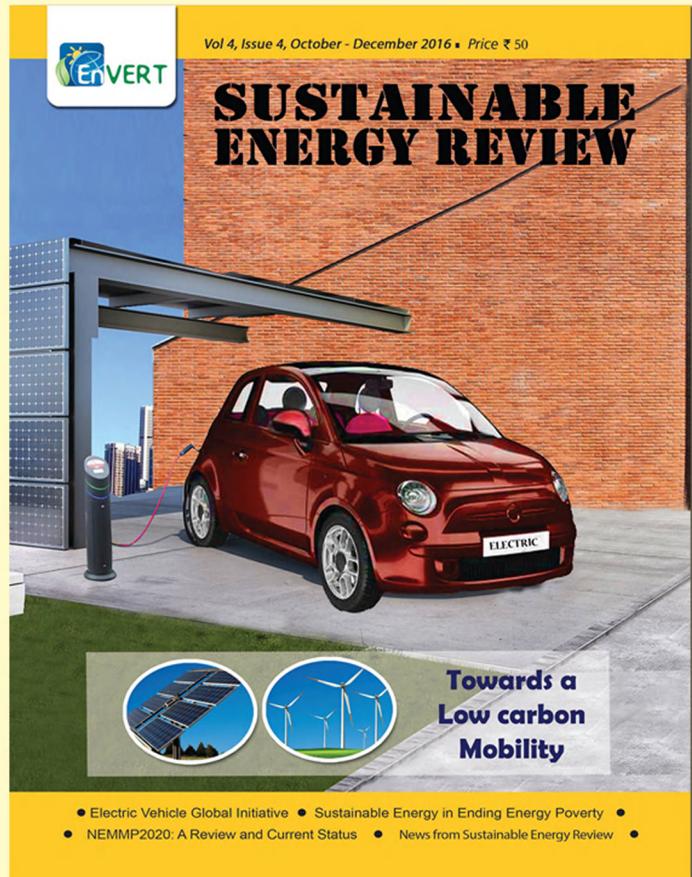


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Sustainable Energy Reviews is a one-of-a-kind magazine covering technology, industry, policy and finance for the entire spectrum of renewable energy technologies. The Magazine is targeted at companies involved directly in renewables, owners and managers of renewable energy sites, manufacturers of complete renewable energy systems, research and training establishments, consultants in renewable energy sector, decision makers in power generating utilities, local or central governments, energy advisory or planning agencies old agencies, small and large energy users and so on. The publishing frequency is 4 times per year.

The magazine seeks to disseminate the knowledge of renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency and is therefore aimed of publicizing the major technical and non technical issues of these technologies in a simplified manner. It is aimed at reaching a large number of people - the commoners those from the industry and the institutes wherein people are somehow facing the challenges of energy. The trans-disciplinary magazine has a long way to go.



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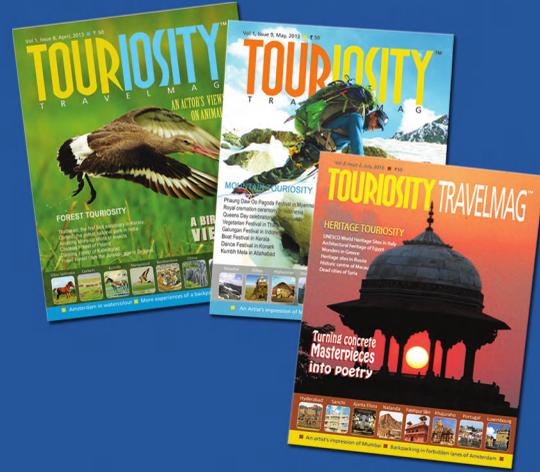
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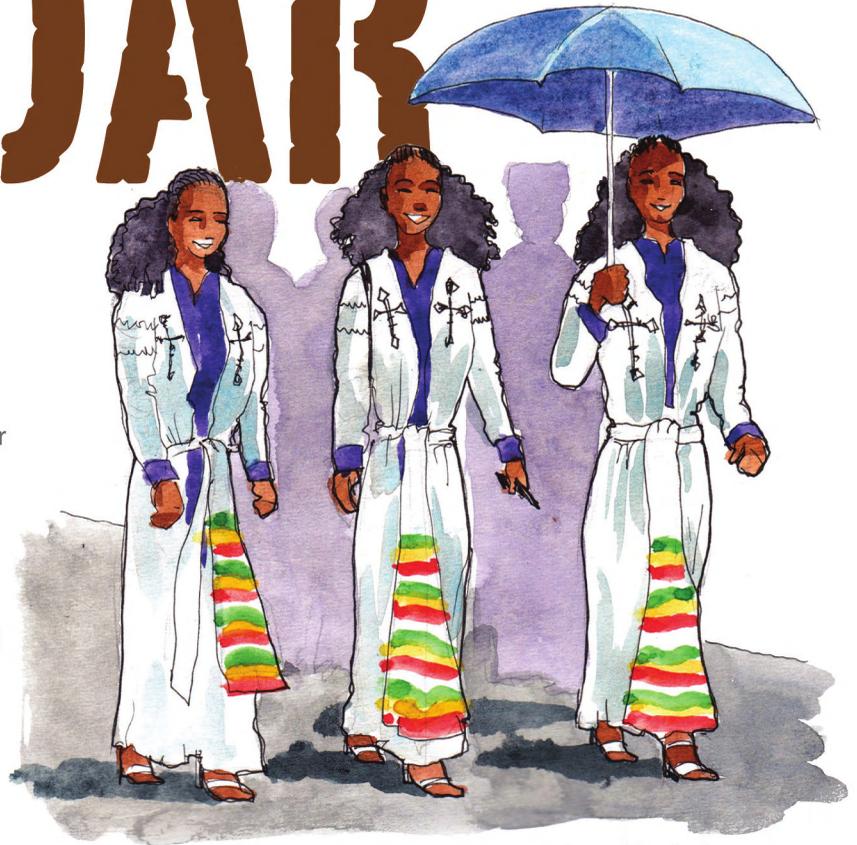
GONDAR

MY TRIP TO

TRAVEL JOURNAL

This is the journal of the trip I did to Gondar (Ethiopia) during the Timkat festivity. It doesn't intend to be a complete guide of the place, but an extract of my personal impressions in this unique place.

Text & illustrations:
Joaquín Dorao



Fasiladas Bath



Women dressed for the festivity



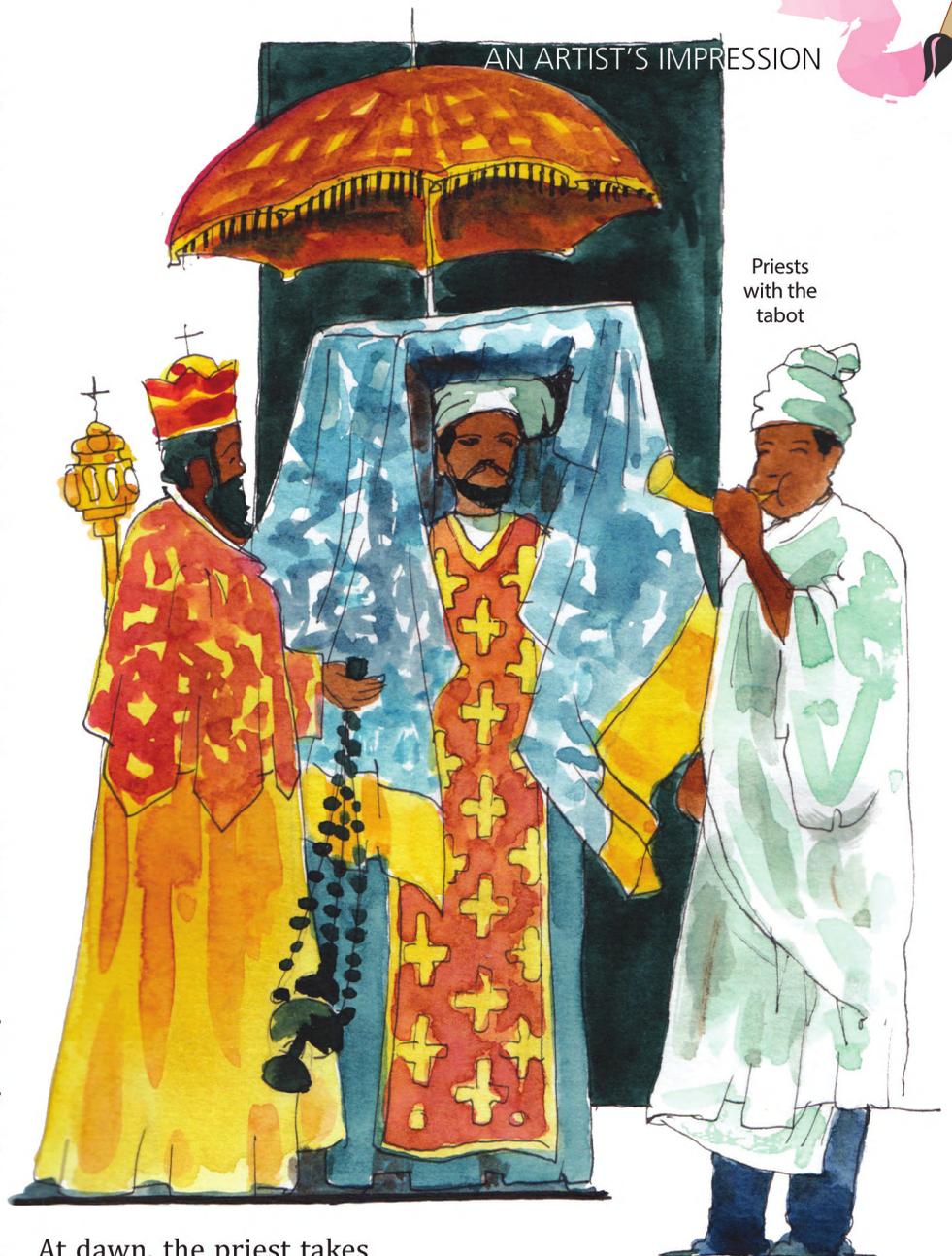
I made my visit to Gondar coincide with the Timkat celebration. Timkat is the Ethiopian Orthodox celebration of Epiphany, the baptism of Christ in the Jordan River. It takes place on January 19. Its roots go back to the times of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. His son Menelik I brought the Ark of the Covenant to Ethiopia, which has been kept ever since in Axum, in the north of the country. Every Ethiopian church has a replica of the Tablets of the Law, which are brought out in procession each year on Timkat day.

Christianity was established in Ethiopia in the fourth century. It was subordinate to the Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria until 1959, the year in which he separated from the Coptic church.

The Timkat is celebrated around the Ark of the Covenant, the wooden chest that contains the tablets on which the Ten Commandments or laws of the ancient Israelites are inscribed. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has always said that it is in the holy city of Aksum (Axum), where it is housed in a special chapel next to the Church of St. Mary of Zion. It is guarded day and night by a monk who is the only one who has access to it.

In every Orthodox church in Ethiopia there is a tabot or replica of the Ark, which is carried out in procession by priests and worshipers on the eve of Timkat. Covered in ceremonial cloth, it is carried on the shoulders to a tent near a stream or pond.

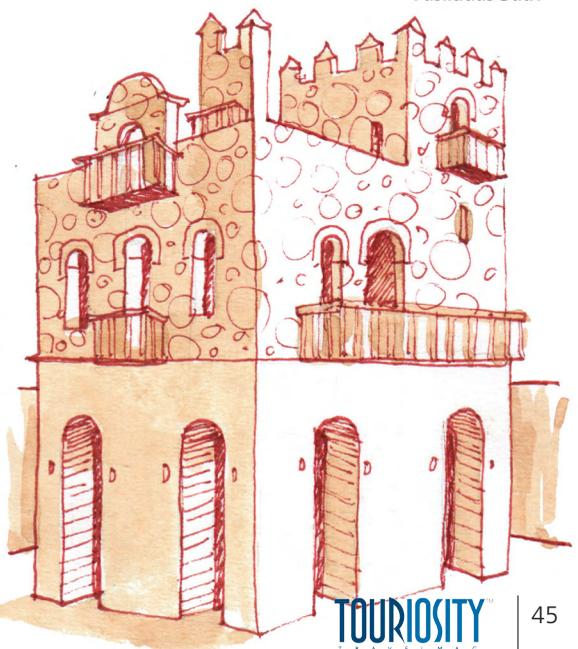
The procession that accompanies the tabot is particularly colourful, with everyone dressed in white and the priests in brightly colored robes and sequined velvet umbrellas. The tabot remains in the tent throughout the night, while Orthodox Christians gather around it to sing, dance and pray. Mass is celebrated at 2:00 a.m. and people picnic under the dim light of oil lamps, drinking the Ethiopian beer that they have brewed especially for this holiday.



Priests with the tabot

At dawn, the priest takes a ceremonial gold cross, dips it in the water, and uses it to extinguish a candle that stands on the makeshift altar or on a post in the river. After this, he sprinkles water on the faithful who have gathered to commemorate the baptism of Christ. After this, the Tabot is carried in a procession back to the church, accompanied by the sound of bells, drums, trumpets and chants. January 20 is the feast of Archangel Michael, a popular saint in Ethiopia,

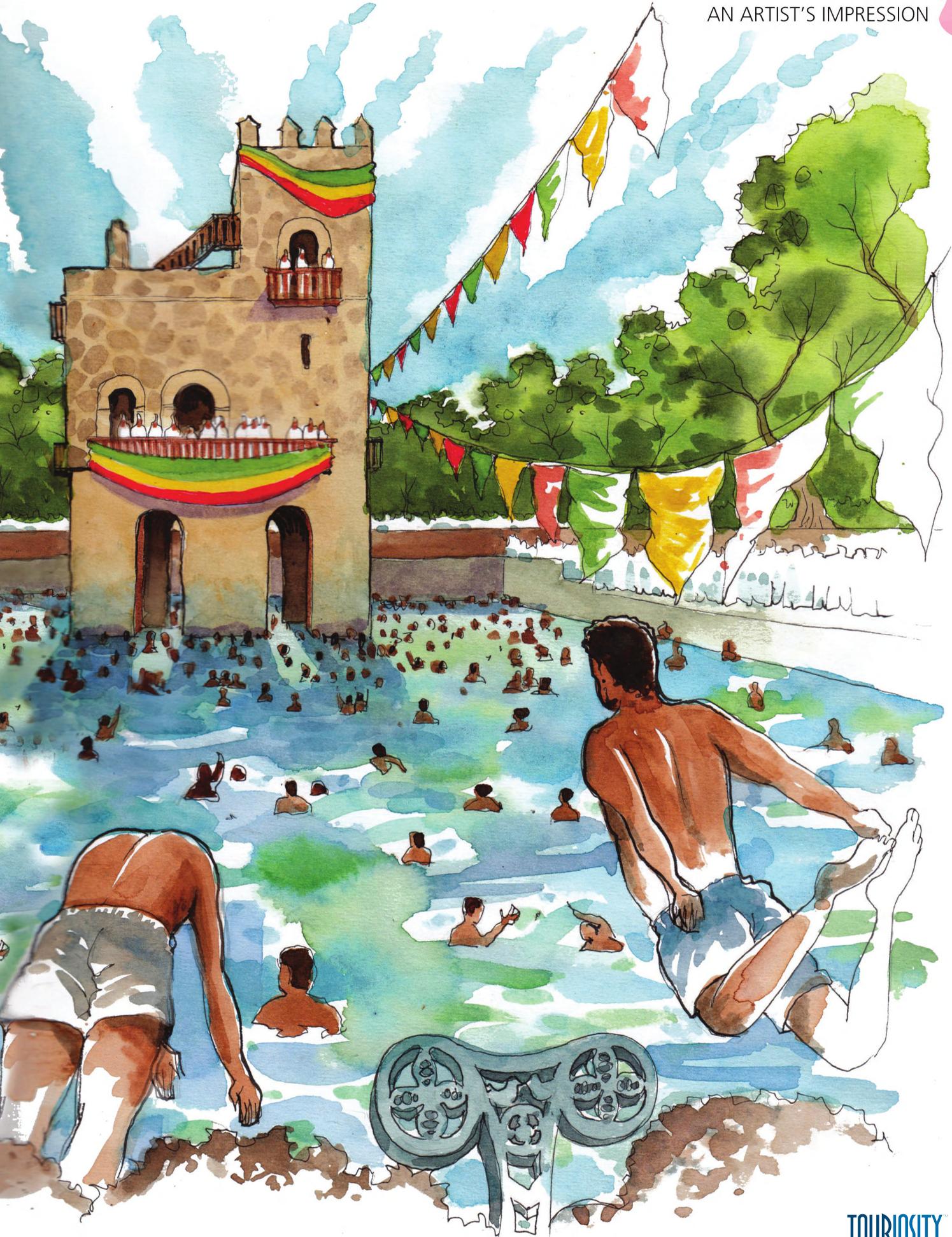
Fasiladas Bath



AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

Jumping into Fasiladas Bath,
once the water is blessed







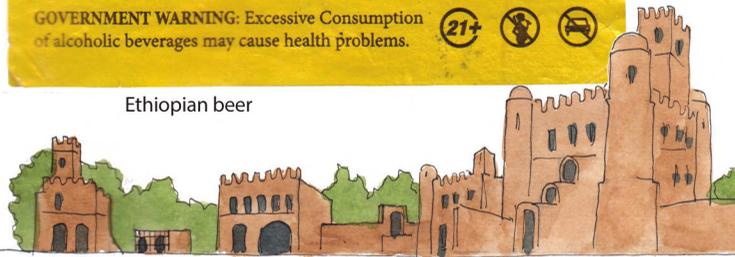
Fasiladas Castle



AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION



Ethiopian beer



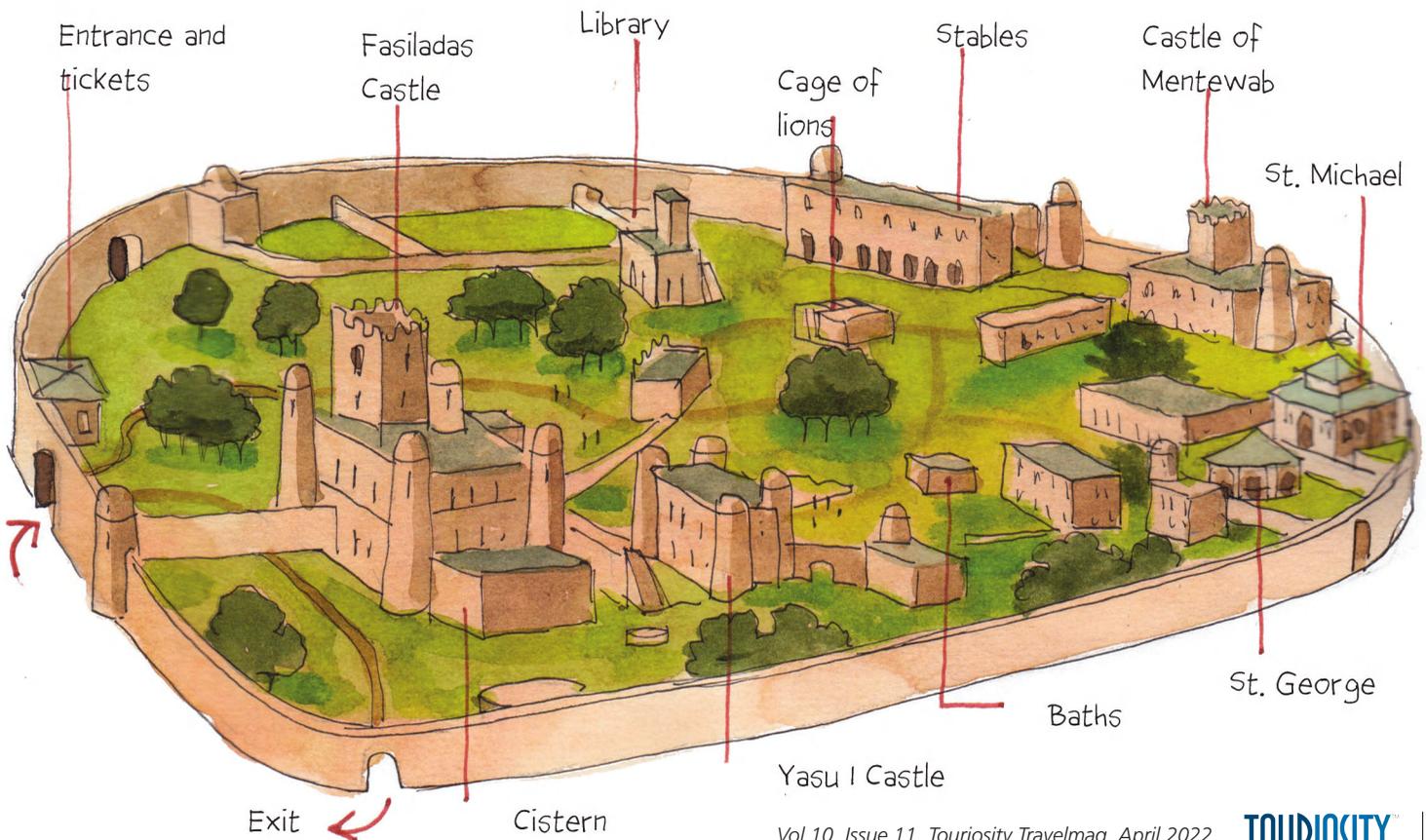
local, central hotel to be closer to the celebrations. In fact, many of the Timkat processions passed in front of my hotel, next to Fasiladas Castle. I spent 4 days in the city and, apart from the Timkat parades and celebrations, I also visited the Fasiladas Palace. This is a fortified citadel from the 16th century, in which the kings of the time built great stone castles, with the help of Portuguese merchants and Indian architects. This interesting mix makes this citadel a fascinating place.

And another treasure of Gondar, smaller but no less fascinating, is the hermitage of Debre Birhan Selassie. They call it the "Sistine Chapel" of Ethiopian art. It is decorated inside with count-

giving everyone an excuse to extend the celebration for another day.

Most of the hotels in Gondar are on the outskirts, but I booked a small,

less wonderful multicolored paintings with scenes from the Bible and the New Testament. It was the perfect finishing touch for my stay in Gondar.



AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

The paintings inside the church



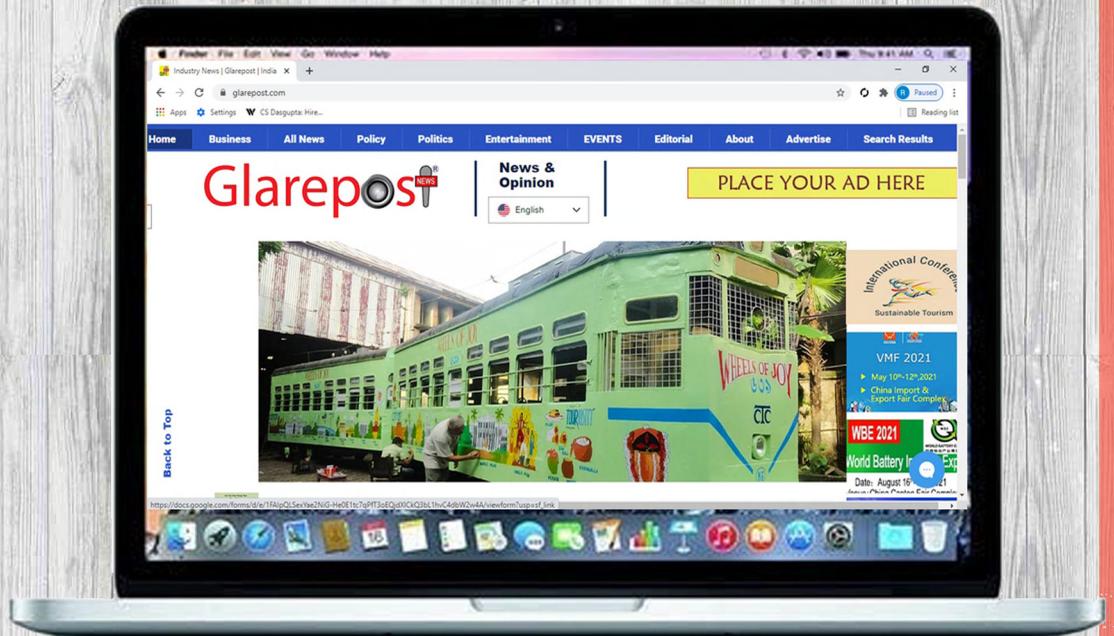
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