

ASIA TIMES

Mum From Mumbai

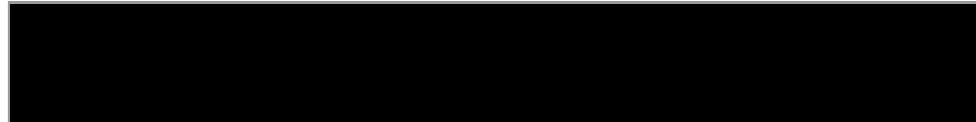
Makes \$7,597 USD a month

[Learn How...](#)



[HOME](#) [NEWS & FEATURES](#) [ASIA UNHEDGED](#) [AT TOP COLUMNISTS](#) [ABOUT US](#) [VIDEO](#)

[China](#) [Japan](#) [Koreas](#) [Southeast Asia](#) [South Asia](#) [Central Asia](#) [Middle East](#)



[HOME](#) > [ASIA TIMES NEWS & FEATURES](#) > [LAW OF THE JUNGLE IN A DIFFERENT CONFLICT ZONE](#)

Law of the jungle in a different conflict zone

BY GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN on FEBRUARY 17, 2016 in ASIA TIMES NEWS & FEATURES, INDIA

Man-animal conflict is on the rise the world over as population growth forces humans to clear forests for land, food and shelter. As forest cover shrinks and corridors of natural movements of animals are gradually encroached upon, they are forced to enter villages leading to loss of lives, destruction of crops and property. A poisoned tiger in the wild or an electrocuted elephant near a field point to man's own failure to find a solution to this age-old conflict

One of my earliest memories of man-animal conflict goes back to the 1960s. A baby elephant in the John Wayne film, *Hatari*, escapes from its enclosure and runs amok in a small town — pushing people into panic.

But of course, unlike in the movie where the calf does very little harm and the scene itself is shot in a light vein to a hauntingly beautiful musical score, man-animal conflict the world over has often been dangerous and disastrous. And it has been happening since time immemorial.

Man-elephant conflict in Africa is as old as agriculture itself. San or Bushman rock art in the continent frequently portrays people fleeing large animals like elephants. Early 19th century historians have spoken about elephant invasions and crop destructions and how these have led to loss of homes and food shortages. All these continue to happen till this day.

Crocodiles still kill humans in the Lake Nasser area in Egypt and in Mozambique, leopards still attack people around Cape Town, and lions still maul men on the outskirts of Nairobi. Besides this, the animals prey on livestock — leading to economic losses.

In a highly populous country like India, man-animal conflict has been getting more and more common with forests being cleared for farming (or being plundered for timber by poachers) and



Incidents of big cats straying into villages and cities are on the rise in India

HOUSING.COM

Rs.55.0 Lacs
2 BHK, Saligramam - Chennai

FROM THE VATICAN

ASIA TIMES EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

THE WORLD NEED NOT FEAR CHINA



POPE'S FIRST-EVER INTERVIEW ON CHINA

ON CHINA'S FIRST RISE
ITS POSITIVE MOMENT
MATTEO RICCI
THIRD WORLD WAR
FAMILY AND FORGIVENESS

[CLICK TO READ THE SPECIAL INTERVIEW](#)

with human settlements encroaching into wildlife territories. Ideally, forest peripheries must be free of men, but they do go there and beyond to gather honey or with their sheep, cows and buffalos for them to graze.

Or people go to fish — like in the Sundarbans, eastern India. Tigers regularly attack men on boats waiting in the riverine estuary for their daily catch.

Human-elephant conflict has been most worrying in India. There are about 30,000 wild elephants, and their confrontation with men has been leaving 350 or so people dead year after year. And crops worth Rs 150 million are damaged annually. Also, some 50 elephants are killed every year (this figure is highly conservative) by angry villagers in connivance with poachers. Sometimes, forests are illegally cleared in the mistaken belief that elephants will stay away.

They do not, as we saw recently in Siliguri on the foothills of the Himalayas — where an elephant, enraged over lack of food, entered the town and caused havoc. Vehicles were destroyed, houses were damaged and people froze in fright as the mammoth beast stomped along.

Also recently, a leopard, blind in one eye and with a missing canine, walked into a posh school in Bengaluru in the southern Indian state of Karnataka. Mercifully, the animal chose a day when children were enjoying a holiday, and it took many hours of clumsy handling by wildlife officials to tranquillize the leopard.

And after all this high drama that could have seen men dead, the leopard escaped from an enclosure.

Leopards have also been sighted on the suburbs of Mumbai, and obviously they have been driven into highly populated areas by lack of food in their own habitats, where shrinking vegetation causes a depletion in deer population.

Man-animal conflict in India has a sub-plot which is equally disturbing. Villagers livid over cattle losses and men being eaten up by tigers (which begin their journey into human settlements by first attacking domestic cattle and turn man-eaters later) become willing accomplices of poachers — who pay good money for a dead tiger.

The other day, a tiger was found dead in Kodaikanal, a hill resort in southern India. A post-mortem revealed that it was poisoned. In last November alone, 22 big cats were killed by poachers across India.

Elephants are also poached for their ivory, and the simple folks who reside in rural India are often at a loss to find an answer to marauding elephants which, peeved over disappearing forest cover and migratory paths, go on the rampage.

Although, the solution to man-animal conflict is no rocket science, it is still not easy to implement it. India's exploding population needs more food and shelter, and additional land has to be carved out of forests — which in turn makes animals homeless. The spark for a conflict.

Gautaman Bhaskaran is an author, commentator and movie critic, who has worked with The Statesman in Kolkata and The Hindu in Chennai for 35 years. He now writes for the Hindustan Times, the Gulf Times and The Seoul Times.

(Copyright 2016 Asia Times Holdings Limited, a duly registered Hong Kong company. All rights reserved. Please contact us about sales, syndication and republishing.)

Share this:



Related

Elephant country turns into killing fields
August 15, 2015
In "Asia Times News & Features"

Mumbai's dance with leopards
October 28, 2015
In "Asia Times News & Features"

Six suspected tiger poachers shot dead in Bangladesh
August 9, 2015
In "Asia Times News & Features"

🔍

Safari Power Saver
Click to Start Flash Plug-in
General Insurance
India's 1st private sector general insurance company

Travel Insurance

Get your trip covered,
without documentation or medical test

Latest Headlines

[Japan launches satellite to study holes](#)

Mum From Mumbai

Makes
\$7,597
USD
a month



[Learn How...](#)

Subscribe to our Newsletter

Email *

Panel discussion: The Commonwealth Club of California & Committee of 100 present:



"The UK sees China as a friend, Why don't we?" with Author Martin Jacques and

Prof. Susan Shirk and moderated by Asia Times columnist George Koo.

Thursday, Feb. 18, 2016

SAP, 3410 Hillview Ave.,
Palo Alto, CA 94303

6:00 pm - Check In

6:30-7:30 pm - Program

For more information and press inquiries please contact

ispivey@committee100.org

[← Watch the world's largest telescope, built to detect alien existence](#)

[Regulators leave China's wealth management agency unplugged →](#)

Categories: [Asia Times News & Features](#), [India](#) Tags: [In India 50 elephants killed every year](#), [leopard enters Bengaluru school](#), [Man-animal conflict on the rise](#), [Man-elephant conflict in Africa is as old as agriculture itself](#), [Poachers prey on big cats](#)

RELATED ARTICLES



[Boycott North Korean restaurants abroad, Seoul urges citizens](#)



[Indonesian police warned of IS plot to put cyanide in their food](#)



[Iran warns Riyadh against sending troops to Syria](#)



[China cautions Australia over defense ties with Japan](#)



[Russia, Iran coordinate moves on Syria](#)



[Rallies set for convicted Chinese NYC officer Peter Liang](#)

0 Comments [Asia Times](#)

Gautaman Bhask...

Recommend

Share

Sort by Best ▾



Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

ALSO ON ASIA TIMES

[Hopeless but not Syri-ous](#)

25 comments • 19 hours ago

Jay — Spengold's Iran obsession continues. It's amusing to watch him throw an attack on Iran in for good measure in the next to last ...

[South China Sea takes center stage at US-ASEAN summit](#)

6 comments • a day ago

BaronR — It is a pity that some of these ASEAN members could not look further in a broader picture. Piggy backing on US Pivot to Asia ...

[Saudi Arabia's obsession with removing Assad may prove self-destructive](#)

23 comments • a day ago

ASA — I hope that country is renamed as just "Arabia"!

[BOJ launches negative rates, already dubbed a failure by markets](#)

3 comments • a day ago

smukster — Trouble is that nobody seems to know what the goal is - that way it's hard to tell whether or not it's a "success". Beneficial ...

Subscribe

Add Disqus to your site

Add Disqus Add

Privacy

DISQUS

Recent Posts

[Regulators leave China's wealth management agency unplugged](#)

[Law of the jungle in a different conflict zone](#)

[Watch the world's largest telescope, built to detect alien existence](#)

[China promises economic stability as G20, parliament loom](#)

[Skiers capture video of rare snow leopard](#)

AT Opinion

[Warring ideas: Yan Xuetong's awful concept of a Chinese military alliance](#)

16 February 2016 - Richard A. Bitzinger

There is a certain perverse joy at watching an academic try to be a policy wonk, mostly because th [...]

SUBSCRIBE

for the latest news and updates from Asia Times in your inbox

Asia Times Forum

[The Future of Europe](#)

views: 1536, replies: , 17 Feb 2016

[US Primaries mega thread](#)

views: 471, replies: , 17 Feb 2016

[Trump and Cruz not GOP elite favorites](#)

views: 902, replies: , 17 Feb 2016

[Justice Scalia dead](#)

views: 146, replies: , 17 Feb 2016

[Today's Middle East](#)

views: 22, replies: , 17 Feb 2016

[Justice Scalia's Catholicism: On Pope Francis, Miracles, Holy Mass, Eucharist, Marian Apparitions and the Devil ...](#)

views: 35, replies: , 16 Feb 2016

[Political Humor](#)

views: 522, replies: , 16 Feb 2016

[Gun Sales Spike Across the U.S.](#)

Facebook

Asia Times Online

22 minutes ago

#ATVIDEO #China

Watch the world's largest telescope, built to detect alien existence
atimes.com

About 10,000 people in China will be relocated to make way for the world's largest radio telescope, which is built to detect alien existence. Built in the south-western Guizhou province, the ...

[View on Facebook](#) · [Share](#)

39 minutes ago

#ATVIDEO

Skiers capture video of rare snow leopard
atimes.com

Australian skier Owen Lansbury and his friends have captured this video of a rare and endangered snow leopard in the Indian state of Kashmir. According to the World Wildlife Fund, there are up to 6...

[View on Facebook](#) · [Share](#)

13,061 likes

[Like Page](#)[Share](#)

FOLLOW AT ON TWITTER

TAG CLOUD

Afghanistan AlIB **China** China
economy Chinese economy
Chinese stock market Chinese
stocks economy fashion trends IMF
India Iran ISIS Islamic
State Israel Japan Kim Jong Un
Malaysia Myanmar Narendra Modi

ASIA TIMES NEWS RSS

[Law of the jungle in a different conflict zone](#)
[Boycott North Korean restaurants abroad, Seoul urges citizens](#)
[Indonesian police warned of IS plot to put cyanide in their food](#)

ARCHIVES

[February 2016](#) (304)
[January 2016](#) (556)
[December 2015](#) (589)
[November 2015](#) (463)
[October 2015](#) (473)

Tweets [Follow](#)

AT Asia Times [@asiatimesonline](#) 1h
#ATVIDEO #China fb.me/4o4Oug66c Show Summary

AT Asia Times [@asiatimesonline](#) 1h
#Watch the #world's largest #telescope, built to detect #alien existence #ATVIDEOatimes.com/2016/02/watch-... pic.twitter.com/oHrWz2apyO



AT Asia Times [@asiatimesonline](#) 1h
#ATVIDEO fb.me/7MOzP00iq Show Summary

[Tweet to @asiatimesonline](#)

[North Korea](#) [Obama](#) [Pakistan](#)
[PBOC](#) [Philippines](#) [Putin](#)
[Russia](#) [Saudi Arabia](#) [security](#)
[Shinzo Abe](#) [South China Sea](#)
South China Sea dispute [South Korea](#) [Spratlys](#)
[Syria](#) [Syrian civil war](#) [Taiwan](#)
[Taiwan presidential election](#) [Thailand](#)
[Tsai Ing-wen](#) [Turkey](#) [Uyghurs](#) [Xi Jinping](#) [yuan](#)

 [ASIA UNHEDGED RSS](#)

[Regulators leave China's wealth management agency unplugged](#)
[China promises economic stability as G20, parliament loom](#)
[Vodafone says tax reminder shows disconnect between Modi govt and tax dept](#)

[September 2015](#) (420)

[August 2015](#) (452)

[July 2015](#) (376)

[June 2015](#) (309)

[May 2015](#) (227)

[April 2015](#) (310)

[March 2015](#) (149)

[February 2015](#) (18)

 [CHATHAM HOUSE RULES RSS](#)

[Norman Bailey: Putin is a Russian nationalist operating in a power vacuum](#)
[Michael Ledeen: Islamists may defeat Russia in Syria](#)
[Angelo Codevilla responds: "Russian national interest" is the wrong question](#)