

icking your finger with a knife while chopping some tomatoes for a salad is just a nuisance for most of us. We utter a choice word or two, rinse the cut, apply a disinfectant and maybe a band-aid, and then proceed to go on with our lives. Unfortunately, for some 400,000 people, simple paper cuts, nicks, and scrapes can actually be dangerous or even life-threatening if the blood disorder known as hemophilia. The day's purpose is to raise awareness about the disease as well as other bleeding disorders and also to raise money for the treatment of those who cannot afford it.

### #WORK-LIFE BALANCE

## Working @ Odd Hours

A chaotic shift work schedule causes havoc on the employee and employer



People, who work irregular job schedules, starting at 22 are more likely to report sleep issues, poor health, and depressive symptoms by age 50, according to a new study.

Researchers are taking a closer look at the impact of erratic work hours on the health of employees, nurses who make rounds into the predawn hours, jobs with irregular shifts, and software engineers, who stay in the 'zone' long past midnight.

The study shows that schedule chaos, an increasing phenomenon, can take a serious toll. Wen-Jui Han, a professor in the New York University Silver School of Social Work, with training in sociology, economics, developmental psychology, and public policy, led the study.

The study looks at how one's social position 'plays a significant role in these adverse health consequences' from working jobs with shifts outside the more traditional 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

The findings show that individuals occupying a lower social position, such as those who did not go to college or whose job status may be precarious, are more likely than some others to suffer from inadequate or poor sleep.

Here are some additional takeaways from the study. Han's research is the first to use longitudinal studies and a life-course perspective (with sequence analysis) to examine how work schedule patterns, whether consistently or periodically irregular, starting in our early 20s, might be associated with our sleep and health as we approach mid-life.

Her analysis relies on the National Longitudinal Study of Youth, a nationally representative sample of about 7,000 people in the US conducted over three decades. The data collection began in 1979, asking participants about their sleep and mental and physical health over time, along with their evolving work schedules.

Non-standard work schedules are increasingly becoming a global phenomenon.

The significantly poorer sleep and health outcomes, observed through the longitu-



**Divyabhanusinh Chawda**  
Ex-India head for WILF, A renowned wildlife expert

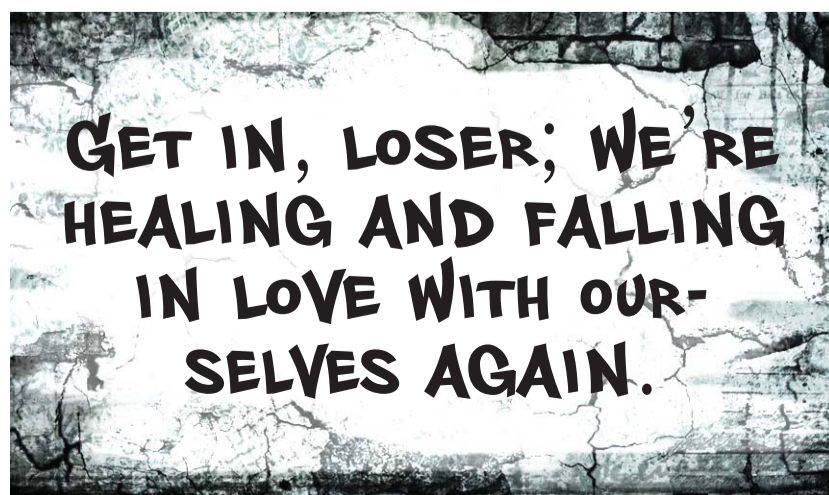
In addition to the hunting and capture of wild animals, human progress, resulting in destruction of the habitat over the millennia, took its toll. It is clear that the numbers of larger mammals decreased exponentially in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the 'rhino' was no exception. By the beginning of the 20th century, about 200 individuals survived, according to one estimate, as noted in Chapter 1. Numbers apart, chronicles of 'shikar' of the British period were certainly alive to the desperate situation that the animal faced and had started to express concern about it.

By the beginning of the 19th century, Williamson had already noted that the rhinoceros was not found West of the Ganga. 'Maori' recording his exploits later in the century noted that while rhinoceroses were not protected in the Terai area of India, they were protected by the Rana rulers of Nepal in their part of the Terai, where outsiders did not have permission to shoot them. In fact, when 'Maori' accidentally shot one there, his host was much exercised. Captain J.H. Baldwin, a sportsman, writing at about the same time, noted that the animal was found on the banks of the Sarda in Nepal, Pilibhit and Gorakhpur districts but it is 'now extinct there or very nearly so'.

Alexander A. Kinnel noted that about the 1860s, many rhinoceroses had been shot around Jalpaiguri, but their party, owing to being constantly hunted, and partly owing to the clearance of large tracts for tea cultivation, they are rapidly becoming scarcer. In eastern portion of Bhutan Doors and in Assam, wherever there are heavy reed jungles on the banks of rivers or on margin of swamps, occasionally several congregate in one 'reserve'.

E.G. Afalo's compendium of sport available to the British, written in 1904, noted that 40 years earlier, rhinoceroses had been extremely numerous and several could be hunted down in a single day. Afalo went on to record that, "Owing to indiscriminate slaughter of both sexes and all sizes, their numbers have been terribly reduced but there are enough left to enable a well-equipped sportsman to be pretty sure of obtaining one or two spec-

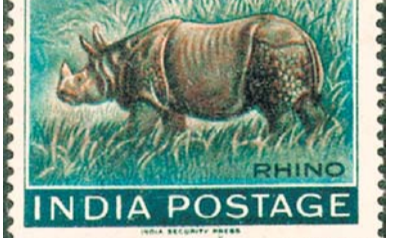
### THE WALL



# ...Saving The Gaiinda



**#RHINOCEROS**



imens." He also stated that shooting them in Nepal could only be done with a special permit.

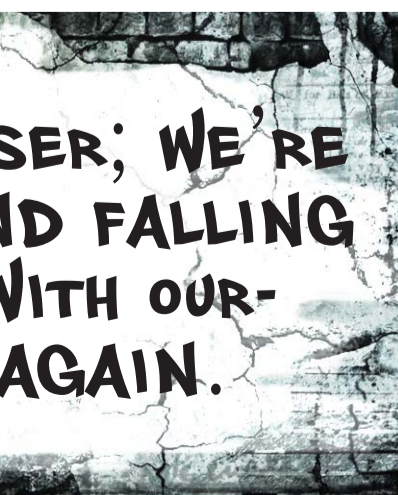
Writing in 1910, Sainthill Eardley-Wilmot noted that while rhinoceroses and bison (gaur) were found earlier in the Bengal Terai, again, became rampant in the 1930s. In 1938, A.J.W. Milroy, Chief Conservator of Forests, opened the area to the public. Until the dawn of India's independence, this position continued. The rhinoceros, thus, received protection in Assam.

Tradition has it that Lord Curzon was responsible for saving the rhinoceros. However, the facts brought out by Ranjit Barhakur and Bittu Sahgal conclusively show that these first steps were taken by a few determined, enlightened officers of the British Indian government. Barhakur and Sahgal record that the late S. Deb Roy, a remarkable Forest Officer of Assam and a conservationist, stated that Lady Mary Curzon, the Vicereine, had visited the Kaziranga region at the turn of the 20th century, with the specific purpose of seeing this magnificent animal. However, she was not lucky, for all she saw was its spoor, and this led to her advocating for the protection of the rhino. There is yet another story doing the rounds. Lady Curzon went to Kaziranga in January 1905. She was accompanied by 'Nigona Shikari', Bapiram Hazarika of Bosagaon, who convinced her that the animal she had seen in the distance was a rhino and 'not a buffalo.'

There is, however, no written record of this visit and the story is probably apocryphal.

There is no record of Lord Curzon visiting Kaziranga either, but he was very much alive to the problem of conservation of wild animals. In 1901, the Burma Game Preservation Association sent a memorial to the Viceroy, seeking the imperial government's approval to shoot that in the brown-antlered deer of Burma. In his celebrated reply of 1902, the Viceroy presents a tour de force of an argument for conservation that was rare in the empire at the time. His own words ring true even today: "There are some persons who doubt or dispute the progressive diminution of wildlife in India. I think that they are wrong. The facts seem to me to point entirely in the opposite direction. Up till the time of the Mutiny, lions were shot in Central India. They are now confined to an ever-narrowing patch of forest in Kathiawar. I was on the

### BABY BLUES



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### Protecting the Rhino

It is evident that the battle for the protection of the rhinoceros was to be fought in the easternmost regions of India, in the Assam region of the Bengal presidency. The issue of depleting numbers of the animal was recognized by the administration as early as 1902, when J.C. Arbuthnot, Officiating Commissioner of the Assam Valley districts, wrote to B. Fuller, Chief Commissioner of Assam, on November 4 stating that the animal had been wiped out except in the Brahmaputra, Mikir Hills in Nowong and Golaghat, where a few individuals still exist. Fuller replied on December 18 that while he regretted the plight of the animal, it would be impossible to penalize unlicensed shooters without special legislation, though, he was open to create an asylum for them in the form of a reserved forest.

The possible areas for such a reserve were surveyed by an army officer, Major P.R.T. Gurdon, and on September 20, 1904, E.C. Carr, the Conservator of Forests, recommended that Kaziranga be declared a 'Reserved Forest.' This was promptly approved by Fuller and on June 1, 1905, a Gazette notification proposing to declare it as such was made. On January 3, 1906, Kaziranga was declared a 'Reserved Forest,' and then upgraded to a 'Game Sanctuary' in 1916. It appears that the Kaziranga area had become a haven for hunters and poachers, and hunting, once

### ZITS



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### After independence

The question, therefore, arises, what was the 'rhinoceros inheritance' that the Republic of India received? The Javan and Sumatran rhinoceroses had long gone from the Indian subcontinent. What we know about the numbers of the greater one-horned rhinoceros is essentially a result of intelligent estimations by wildlifers, naturalists and forest officials, as no systematic population evaluation was done. That the situation was critical is obvious from the fact that as early as 1954, M.R. Medhi, Chief Minister of Assam, wrote to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru that 'the rhinoceros was on the verge of extinction in his state.'

Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, thus acquiring the highest status for protection.

In addition to the government's efforts, there is another reason for the gradual success of the 'protection of the rhinoceros' over the last several decades. The Assamese people take a special pride in their 'gaiinda.' It has a unique place in local tradition. According to one legend, the Princess of Sonitpur, daughter of king Ban, had a dream of a handsome prince with whom she fell in love. Her friend, Princess Chitralakha drew likenesses of all the eligible princes of India until finally she drew a picture of Aniruddha, the grandson of Lord Krishna, whom the princess recognized as her dream prince. Aniruddha came to Sonitpur to fetch the princess and apparently, he was confined there by the king. Then, lord Krishna arrived, riding on a rhinoceros all the way from Dwarka, to rescue Aniruddha. He left his mount in Kaziranga to graze and crossed the Brahmaputra to wage war. Upon the successful completion of his mission, he played his flute to call the rhinoceros, who could not hear it because of the sound of the flowing waters of the river. Lord Krishna was annoyed. He disowned his mount and proceeded to Dwarka without it. The mount loved the environment of the green grass and stayed back, hence, the animal's presence in Kaziranga. It is also believed that the animal has no hair on its body as it was saddled for battle, according to a variant of the legend, and thus has hair only on its ears and tail tip! According to yet another legend, Lord Krishna's mount was ready for battle with armour. Later, it was considered unsuitable for war and abandoned. However, the armour remained, thus explaining the folds of its armour like skin, which is bequeathed to its descendants.

Over the past decades, Assam and Bengal have seen several insurgent movements. This has impacted the protection of the rhinoceros, to the extent that they were wiped out from Manas and had to be reintroduced from other protected areas. Its horn has made it a coveted target of poachers, which has always been a serious threat and accounts for the continuous decimation of rhino numbers.

The importance of the rhinoceros in the fauna of the Indian subcontinent has been recognized through its depiction on coins, stamps and commemorative issues. Despite the impediments and threats, the conservation efforts of the administration, coupled with the local Assamese pride in their iconic symbol, a sentiment sadly lacking in Bengal, have played a prominent role in the rhino's successful survival and prosperity till date. At the same time, such pride can and has led to some impediments in their reintroduction elsewhere, which is necessary for their long-term survival.

The findings appear in the journal PLOS ONE.

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Greenwald emphasizes that while roadside vegetation can significantly reduce particulate air pollution, it doesn't reduce carbon dioxide emissions or ozone pollution. He says that to achieve a more comprehensive reduction in the health hazards associated with highways, municipalities can improve air quality by making it safe, pleasant, and convenient for people to get where they need to go without a motor vehicle.

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