



World Rainforest Day

The rainforests are keeping our planet alive. They're home to half the world's animal species, they provide us with freshwater, and are essential for keeping our climate stable. Yet every second, one and a half hectares is lost, while each year, 78 million hectares of precious rainforest are destroyed. That's why World Rainforest Day has been created to take decisive action to combat deforestation, reduce the effects of climate change, and protect our rainforests for future generations.

We have introduced a new format that showcases the works of many Jaipur artists and professionals we think should be brought to the attention of our readers. We start with the works of Nihal Mathur and his unique stamp presentations. He tells the Story of Flight by arranging his stamps in historically sequential order to tell the tale. There are in all 38 presentations that takes the reader from the beginning made by the early pioneers and ends with modern aircrafts today.

-Editor



Concept and Design by Nihal Mathur
Computer Graphics by Bharat Kumawat



Nihal Mathur, Filmmaker, Writer

Nihal's childhood was spent in the sylvan surroundings of his home in Alwar in the late 50s and early 60s. It was a large PWD bungalow surrounded by a huge wooded estate full of different birds and animals, especially snakes! From his parents he and his siblings imbibed a love for wilderness and wildlife. Then the family moved to Jaipur. After college Nihal was adrift for several years unsure whether to follow the conventional path or pursue his heart. In between writing competitive exams (he flunked them all!) and looking for jobs in the private sector, he often 'escaped' into the nearby forests of Sariska, not to see wildlife but to reflect & ponder the existential questions he had raised. He would often take a bus to Sariska and then literally walk through the reserve, camping out in wild and lonely places like Naldeshwar, Kankwari, Neelkanth and of course Pandu Pol in the heart of the core area. Bhanwar Singh the legendary forest guard at Kali Ghati, made sure a local person who knew the forest, always accompanied him in his forays into the forest. But the tiger always eluded him. It was in Rathambhore Nihal had ample opportunity to see and photograph tigers. This was in the early years of the Park when Fateh Singh Rathore was the Field Director. Diana Wordsworth, his muse, greatly encouraged Nihal to write and would often correct the text of his stories. And it was 'Fatji' who introduced Nihal to the BBC and that marked a departure from wildlife to films and professional writing. He worked out of Delhi for almost twenty years and then returned to the forests once again after he bid farewell from professional life. He went to live in a small 2 room accommodation at the edge of Todgarh Raoli Wildlife sanctuary where he formed a society called Ecopanions. By then his health issues forced him back to Jaipur. Since then he has been organizing his humongous collection of stamps.....

Aircrafts of WW 1 1914 - 1918

Dogfights over the skies of Europe

Deadly Flying Machines

First World War began with primitive unarmed aircrafts that were primarily used for reconnaissance but by the time the war ended there were sleek fighters and heavy bombers. Germany, Britain and France led the way in aircraft development creating iconic aircrafts like the SPAD, Sopwith Camel and the scourge of allied pilots, the German Fokker. This was the time when air-to-air combat was just beginning as the machine guns were added to the aircrafts. Soon the aircrafts became deadly flying machines that engaged the enemy in aerial combat called 'dogfights' that raged over the European skies. Since the guns could not be positioned in front of the pilot because the propellers obstructed that path, there was a lack of accuracy in aiming at the enemy. It was Fokker, a Dutch designer who invented a system that allowed the machine gun to fire through the propellers by syncing it with the timing the engine that found the gap between the turning propellers. Fitted with synchronization gear, the Fokker Dr I pilots like Manfred von Richthofen or the legendary the 'Red Baron' became heroes. The war came as a shot in the arm for budding aircraft industry. Suddenly there was a demand for aircrafts. Etrich Taube was the first aircraft that was mass produced in Germany but the preeminent fighter during German aerial dominance was the Albatross and the Fokker Dr 1 with three wings, which the Red Baron and other ace pilots preferred flying. Gotha was the German long range heavy bomber. The French had the largest fleet with their militarized versions of the Farmans, Voisins, Caudrons, Breguets, Bleriot and Niuports while the British had their Sopwith Camels, Avro 504 and the BE.2s made in the Royal Aircraft Factory. Other European countries had mostly French aircrafts but the Russians had their own Ilya Murmometz, a huge bomber made by Sikorsky. By the time the war ended, both sides had thousands of planes and experienced pilots to fly them. A new age in aircraft design and production was coming.