

creativity in nature

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Srishti

HARKIDUN ♦ JUBILEE PARK ♦ KOSI ANGLING ♦ MAWPHLANG ♦ PELAGIC TOUR ♦ SARUS CRANE ♦ WOOD SPIDER



The original love birds—with fidelity that goes beyond widow or widowerhood. [Anand Arya](#) shares his love for the [Sarus cranes](#) with you.

When there is steel in one's resolve, dreams can blossom into things beautiful. [Tridibesh Mukherjee](#) writes about [Jubilee Park](#) in Jamshedpur—a vision that Jamshetji Tata had, that has been transformed into a colourful legacy for an entire city.

There is always more to an Indian jungle than any brochure can tout. [D.D. Misra](#) went looking for birds at the Karnala Bird Sanctuary and got caught up in the webs of the [Giant Wood Spider](#) instead.

Forget about the Tiger in the Corbett National Park. You will have better luck with the 'tiger of the Kosi river'. [Harshita Rustagi](#) writes about [Kalyan Patra's](#) encounters with the mighty [Mahseer](#).

32 MAWPHLANG

SACRED GROVE/TREASURE TROVE



The *sacred grove of Mawphlong* epitomises how religious belief can contribute to environmental conservation in such a community-enforced and effective way. *Kaushik Deuti* recently discovered some of the jewels of this treasure trove.

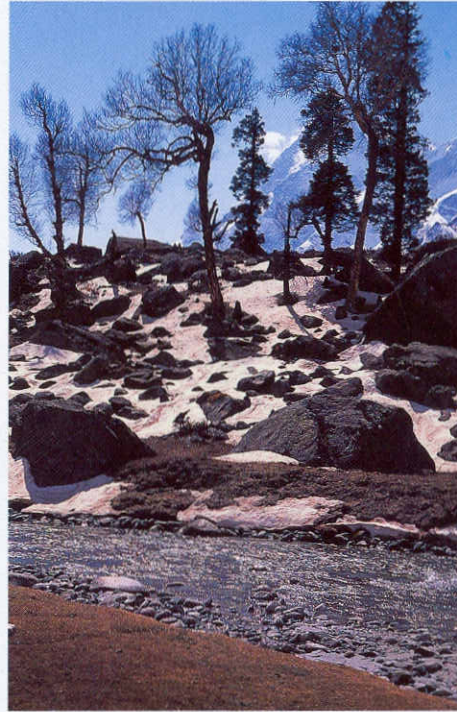
40 PELAGIC PLEASURES



Around and off the shores of Delaware and Maryland on the *Atlantic coast* of the U.S., *Nikhil Devasar* got himself a pretty hefty harvest of targets—both feathered and finned.

66 GARHWAL GRANDEUR

HARKIDUN



It took quite a while to arrange it but when *Deepankar Aron* finally got to undertake the trek to *Harkidun*, it was obviously worth having waited for.

also . . .

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FEEDBACK

Cover Photo

Look at what I caught, Mom!
Antics of a juvenile Sarus

By
Anand Arya



Edit Page Photos

Killing of animals in Denmark and Nepal—both why and how are important issues.

Source
Received in e-mails

A LIVING LEGACY JUBILEE PARK



*Steel cities—sooty, polluted pockets
of profit-oriented productivity.
Not so Jamshedpur!
Its founding fathers had a greater
vision for their township and
employees.
Tridibesh Mukherjee takes you on a
tour of Jubilee Park, in particular its
beautiful trees, part of the legacy
that the founders left us.*

A STEEL city is scarcely ever considered an environmentally pleasing affair. Even those familiar with the vision of the great Jamsetji Tata, would hardly conjure visions of things of beauty when considering Jamshedpur. Yet the premier steel city of the east bowl is one over not the least because of the enormous environmental niceties that are epitomised by the fabulous Jubilee Park.

Jamshedpur is the realisation of a dream of its founder Jamsetji N. Tata, who passed away in 1904, much before the construction of the steel plant and the township, whose work was taken up in 1908.

The Steel City's love for trees dates back to that period, for Jamsetji had narrated his dream as if he had a memory of the future. The visionary founder of the Tata Group had written to his son Sir Dorab, in 1902, that the steel town should have wide streets, lined with trees on both sides, with every other one of a fast-





growing type, with parks and of course, the many other facilities that a modern township should have.

His descendants did not let him down—they fulfilled his dream and went beyond. Jamshedpur, a hub of industrial activity as a steel city, is perhaps the greenest city of the country today.

Many of its well-preserved trees are as old as the steel plant itself.

Jamshedpur is a blessed city in a great many ways. The steel company came up against the will of the British, then at the zenith of their power. It came up in spite of the active discouragement of the government,

with a hundred per cent of the investment coming from 'native' Indians and the Indians showed their solidarity! Mahatma Gandhi came here twice and addressed the workers. Netaji Subhash Bose was a frequent visitor, being the first President of the Workers' Union. Sir M. Visweswarya designed the water reservoir for the steel plant that has been harvesting rainwater



eversince. Water comes to the steel plant through pipelines but is brought in by the force of gravity. Jawaharlal Nehru came here in 1958, when the company doubled its steel-making capacity. To Nehru, such steel plants were the 'temples of modern India'.

The now-clichéd phrase 'Corporate Social

Responsibility' has been in actual practice in Jamshedpur long before it became the buzzword in the speeches of corporate leaders. The creation of the Jubilee Park, inaugurated by then Prime Minister Nehru in 1958, to mark the Golden Jubilee of the steel company was, however, a very significant stride. An area of two hundred acres of inhospitable, barren land was

converted into a lush green park and dedicated to the citizens of the steel town.

The park includes a forty-acre manmade lake with a beautiful green island, now home to thousands of Fruit Bats. Thanks to the arrival of many migratory birds in the winter, the lake itself is a major attraction.



The layout of the park and its horticultural features were designed by G. H. Krumbiegel and B. S. Nirody. They had to their credit the famous Mughal Gardens of India's Rashtrapati Bhavan and the Vrindavan Gardens of Mysore. Thanks to Nirody, five to ten years old trees, between twenty and twentyfive feet in height, were successfully transplanted in large numbers to a piece of land so parched that it had practically no trees.

No one can imagine what this land that is now Jubilee Park, was like fifty years ago! The citizens of Jamshedpur, then a smoky steel city, received a rare combination of an eternal lung and a thing of beauty at the same time—a golden jubilee gift from the company. Every garden with beds of blooming flowering plants looks beautiful in its benign season. The Jubilee Park is beautiful perennially—in summer and the monsoon seasons, as much as it is in winter.

The old and tall leafy trees come into full bloom in summer in this part of India, making for a riot of colours from one end of the park to the other. It is a treat to behold, a centre of horticultural excellence nourished with great love and affection. The summer is also when the bats have their chicks that tenaciously hang on to their mothers. It is another sight that the town folk can rarely get to see, unless they have those special eyes and a pair of binoculars or are in some zoological garden. It is easy to mistake these bats for large black fruit of unknown origin.

The trees that line the road from the western gate of the Jubilee Park to the statue of Jamsetji Tata, *Tebebbuia rosea*, are the earliest to bloom. This species is a native of tropical South America countries like Mexico and is the National Tree of El Salvador. The Jubilee Park and the city of Jamshedpur can boast of many of these grand 50 metre-tall profusely-flowering trees. They flower late March or early April. They flower early but soon their pink flowers have company of the yellows of the





Peltophorum ferrugineum, reds of the Gulmohur and violets of the common *Lagerstromia*. While these are the major flowering trees in summer, there are a great many more varieties of trees. On the other side of this road, beyond a stretch of green, the park boasts of some magnificent evergreen Mahogany trees.

The western gate of the park has a sprawling *Bauhinia galphini*, absolutely splendid with its strikingly red flower. This species comes from South Africa, popular in the Cape area. This tall bush may be the only one of its type in Jamshedpur. Appropriately called the red orchid tree for its looks, this profusely flowering *Bauhinia* may be the most beautiful amongst the many species of *Bauhinia*, that flourish in Jamshedpur.

From the highest point of the park, the founder, resplendent in his bronze visage, has a view of the gardens, the lake, the island and the Dalma range of hills on the horizon. Behind him tower the tall structures of the steel plant a short distance away.

Nearly all the trees in Jubilee Park are around sixty years old and in an excellent state of health. They grab one's attention not just for the flowers but for their trunks and their foliage. The shape and bark features of the trees are strikingly different. Each genus has its characteristic trunk. Jubilee Park gave them freedom to 'blossom' just as the city has provided the environment for greenery to flourish. If the park has colourful trees, the steel plant itself is resplendent in green with beautiful waterbodies that provide homes to birds. Every road of the city is tree-lined on both sides. They flower and the Jacarandas, which are absent in the park, lend a lovely purple hue to the verdant spread. The bungalows of Jamshedpur add to the flowering beauty with carefully selected medium-sized trees—the strikingly popular *Bauhinia*.

On the northern side of Jubilee Park, around almost

Left and right: *The colourful blossoms of Lagerstroemia thorelli and Bauhinia halphoni up close.*

galphoni

BAUHINIA
GALPHONI



half the lake, is the new zoological park that has been set up by Tata Steel. Not surprisingly, it has a Safari Park, where one can be driven around and find a lovely surprise in many nooks and corners. Here also, is a delightful butterfly enclosure—edutainment for students and possibly for every visitor. Late in the evening, when Nature sleeps, there is a brilliant laser show that plays all year round.

Jamshedpur's Jubilee Park is not on major tourist maps yet but deserves to be. It is a park for all seasons.

It is a dream come true, a thing of beauty and pride beckoning everyone.

I visit Jubilee Park regularly, often in the company of my photographer friend G. Shankar and my horticulturist friend Rakesh Kumar, who helpfully keep pointing out elements that make up the diversity of this park.

However, to understand and appreciate the value of Jamshetji Tata's contribution to this nation, one only

needs to understand and appreciate what is engraved below his statue.

The base of the statue bears the legend—

"SIMOMENTUM REQUIRIS, CIRCUMSPICE"
(For his monument, look around you).

—Text & photography by Tridibesh Mukherjee