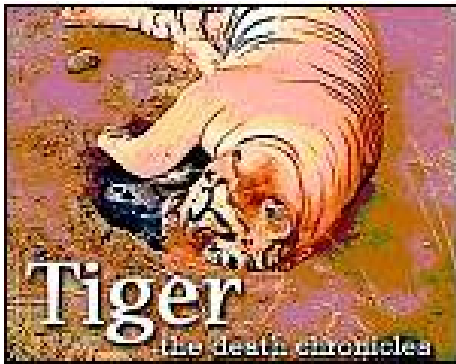


## **Tiger, tiger, not bright enough**

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### **Documentary Filmmaker Krishnendu Bose: On Why Govt Efforts Are Not Enough To Save Our National Animal**

#### **Huned Contractor**



Pune: For 14 months, he travelled through eight states of India and canned 70 hours of footage before documentary filmmaker Krishnendu Bose was satisfied that he had enough material to make a convincing statement about how efforts at protecting the tiger have failed, especially those taken by the government.

The result, a 63-minute film titled ‘Tiger: The Death Chronicles,’ is also an indicator of the way we look at our forests, our conservation and our development. “The fact is we haven’t been very successful in saving the tiger to the extent that it compels us to rethink our perspectives, our engagement with governance and clearly our accountability to ourselves,” Bose states.

This is for the first time that a film joins diverse voices, from tiger scientists and conservationists to ordinary citizens, to attempt a brutal and an honest assessment of the present and the future of the Indian tiger and its habitat. According to the latest government estimate, the tiger population in India is in the range of 1,300 to 1,500 – a considerable drop from 3,642 tigers in 2001.

Given this data, Bose’s film gains considerable importance for the fact that it shows how natives have teamed up with forest department officials at the Jim Corbett National Park in Uttaranchal and BRT Sanctuary in Andhra Pradesh and helped tigers survive. The International Union for Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) recently rated the Corbett National Park as one of the bestmanaged tiger reserves in the country.

Both these reserves, as Bose points out, have something in common. The local residents depend on the forest for their sustenance, and in the process of providing

for themselves, they conserve the forests helping in the protection of the tiger. In BRT, tribals worship the tiger. Bose shows special concern for Central India which has witnessed a dramatic fall of 65 per cent in the tiger population as forests are being used for mining and other commercial purposes.

Encroachment on their habitat has led to a drastic fall in their numbers and have also forced the tigers to come in conflict with humans. Bose has also documented how the Supreme Court's ban on the use of forest produce by traditional users has led to commercial exploitation and the destruction of the forest cover.

Elaborating on what went into the making of this film, Bose says after 20 years of filming wildlife, he was tempted to focus on the mechanics of conservation. "It is difficult to make these kinds of films because bureaucracy has a way of leading you down blind alleys. The attempt is to discover the truth and lay it bare. Also, as a filmmaker, it is important to maintain an objective distance and not let personal bias seep into the narrative," he adds.