

NOW, AN OFFICIAL ANTHEM FOR THE TIGER



Ray, a die-hard conservationist and an approved tiger and lion tracker, has travelled to many remote villages in the past decade to gather data for the government's census. And he insists that the tiger is an indicator to the overall health of the Indian sub-continent's eco-system.

"With glaciers melting due of global warming, population going up by leaps and bounds and rivers dwindling to a trickle, perennial forests are our only source of underground water reserve. They ensure a steady supply of monsoon

The anthem will be translated into 15 Indian languages and played on Doordarshan and All India Radio and the video will be uploaded on the NPCA website

rain, keep the rivers flowing and are the natural habitat of tigers," he reasons.

Unfortunately, Ray adds, in 99 per cent of the villages that lie on the fringe of these virgin forests, locals look upon the tigers as pests who prey on their livestock. They are killed and the forests degraded by these villagers, politicians and builders.

Singer-composer Abhishek Ray joins hands with ministry to save the endangered national animal

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The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the new name for Project Tiger, along with the Ministry of Environment & Forest (MOEF), Government of India, have joined hands with lyricist-composer-singer Abhishek Ray to come up with the first 'official' tiger anthem. It will be launched in Delhi on October 22.

"Tiger se jungle, jungle se barish, barish se nadiyan, nadiyon se hai haryali, tiger hain to hum bhi hain, tum

hain ho, sara Bharat mein hain khushhali...", will be translated into 15 Indian languages and played on Doordarshan and All India Radio. The accompanying video, featuring Ray and singer Kavita Krishnamurthy, along with 'live' footage of wildlife, will be uploaded on the NPCA website.

Number to nature

"The Aircel campaign featuring Stripey the cup created urban awareness but had little connect with the common Indian in the remote villages for whom 1411 tigers were one too

My song drives home the message that if the tiger goes, he will not go alone, you may soon follow

- Abhishek Ray

many. My song moves from a number to nature to drives home the message that if the tiger goes, he will not go alone, you may soon follow," says Ray, whose song came together in four months flat.

He admits that it's not a happy song, there's an underlying threat and it



ends on a grey note. "But that was essential because without fear there can be no redemption," adds Ray, who had earlier composed worked on a trilogy of albums with Gulzar, Udaas Paani, Raat, Chand Aur Main and Kab Aate Ho.

Saving our future

"The tiger may be in conflict with the vote bank but it is at the top of the cycle of life. If they became extinct, the eco-system will collapse too and we would put a full stop to our existence," argues Ray. "By saving our national animal, we are saving our future too."

Ray who debuted in Bollywood with the background score of Haasil and is currently working on the scores of Shaagird and Paan Singh Tomar, has also composed a second song on the subject that encompasses a concern which if not addressed today, could be the end of our tomorrows. He says, "The songs goes, 'Tiger se jeena sekho, tiger ko jeene do...' Hopefully, it will strike the right chord."