SUPER SNIFFER digest

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TRAFFIC's e-newsletter to celebrate achievements of wildlife sniffer dogs in India

KNOW MORE: WILDLIFE SNIFFER DOGS IN TRAINING

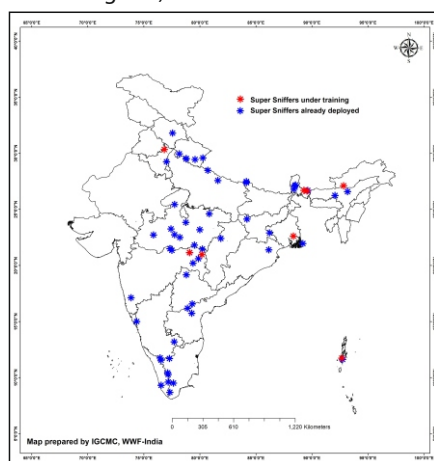**Number of sniffer dogs and handlers under training:** 8 dogs and 16 handlers

Age of the dogs: 6-9 months

Breed: German Shepherd

Training center: Police Training School (Dogs), Special Armed Forces, 23rd Battalion, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

Training period: October 2019- June 2020

Deployment: Arunachal Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Maharashtra and West Bengal Forest Departments; Railway Protection Force (Northern and Eastern regions).

Map prepared by IGCMC, WWF-India

DOG TRIVIA!
Did you know that dogs' wet noses help absorb scent chemicals. Dogs secrete a special mucus that helps absorb chemicals and when dogs lick their noses they sample them to understand the smell.

INDIA'S RAILWAY PROTECTION FORCE TO GET THEIR FIRST SUPER SNIFFERS

For the first time in India, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) will deploy specialised wildlife sniffer dogs for tracking and detecting smuggling of wildlife contrabands through the extensive railway network. Two dog squads- one each for the Northern and Eastern region of Indian Railways–have started their training at the Police Training School (Dogs), Special Armed Forces, 23rd Battalion, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh under TRAFFIC and WWF-India's pioneer wildlife sniffer dog training programme popularly called 'Super Sniffers'.

The RPF is responsible for the protection and security of Indian railways which is reported to be the fourth largest railway network in the world by size. Due to its extensive reach to even the remotest locations, Indian railways have become one of the most preferred means of transportation but is unfortunately also being used for smuggling of illegal wildlife products within the country as well as up to the border areas for cross border trafficking of these wildlife products. RPF can therefore play a critical role in curbing illicit trade of protected and endangered wildlife species. Use of wildlife sniffer dogs for crime detection and prevention is a proven practice that will help and support RPF officials to track and detect wildlife smuggling through railways.

Along with these two sniffers for RPF, also under training are six more dog squads for State Forest Departments of Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. This new batch of wildlife sniffer dogs, which is the 8th such batch to be trained since inception of the programme in 2008, began their training in October 2019 and will pass out in June 2020 as specialised wildlife sniffer and tracker dogs. These dogs are being trained to track and detect wildlife contrabands in transit as well as other wildlife crime activities.

After the completion of their training, these Super Sniffer squads will be deployed by the Forest Departments at sensitive crime hotspots, trade routes, transit points, check posts etc. while one squad each will be deployed by RPF in Northern and Eastern regions. With this, the total strength of wildlife sniffer dogs trained under TRAFFIC and WWF-India's programme in India will touch 74 in 2020. Learn more about the journey of a puppy to becoming a Super Sniffer at https://www.wwfindia.org/about_wwf/enablers/traffic/our_work/training_sniffer_dogs/puppy_to_a_super_sniffer/ . Know more at https://www.traffic.org/what-we-do/projects-and-approaches/wildlife-conservation-technology/wildlife-sniffer-dogs/