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Front cover photo: White-tailed Eagle by Santhosh Krishnamoorthy. Back cover photo: Wallcreeper by Raman Kumar. *Published by MigrantWatch in 2013.* This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License. Copyright of photographs and illustrations remain with their authors.

**Background and** Millions of birds belonging to over 300 species migrate **History** to and from (and within) the Indian subcontinent every vear. When do different species arrive and leave? How does this vary across the country? Are migration timings changing as the climate gradually changes?

> Relatively little is known about these questions. To begin to find the answers, MigrantWatch started in 2007 as a project in which all interested people could join hands to pool their collective observations. Here is a brief summary of the first five years.



ecies Spi reported Photo: Rahul Jauhari Most

## **ROSY STARLING**

619 records

Breeding in Europe and temperate Asia, this bird is a passage/winter migrant in the Indian subcontinent. It often travels in enormous flocks.

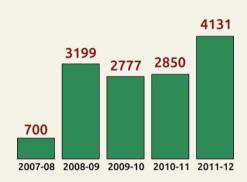


**Sightings** In its first year, MigrantWatch tracked only 9 species, and gathered 700 sightings of these species. Starting from the second year, the list of species was expanded to over 300; and as of 30 June 2012 (the end date for this report), the database contained 14,176 reports of 246 species of migratory birds. The top three species in terms of observations are Rosy Starling, Pied Cuckoo and Grey Waqtail.

# **Geographical** MigrantWatchers have contributed

Coverage observations from 32 States and Union Territories, Most observations are from southern India, followed by northwestern India. There are notable gaps in coverage in the northern plains, parts of central India, and north-eastern India.

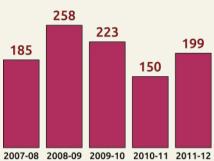
## Number of records





Participants The number of people who have contributed sightings to MigrantWatch increased from 185 in the first year to 632 at the end of the first five years. All contributors are listed, state-wise, on pages 9-16.

# Number of contributors



**Arrival dates of MigrantWatch focuses on collating first** migrant birds sightings (6,697 records in the database) and last sightings (699 records) of the

> migration season. Based on these, as well as sightings tagged "general" (6,303 records), details about migration timing are gradually emerging. For example, we

Most reported species



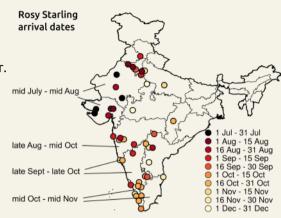
# **PIED CUCKOO**

584 records

This bird shows an unusual west to east migration. The subspecies in central and north India migrates from Africa while the southern one is resident.



can say that the Grey Wagtail makes its appearance in late August; while the Blyth's Reed Warbler arrives in early September. MigrantWatch data shows that Rosy Starlings arrive early (around mid to end July) in northwestern India, but then take three to four months to trickle down to the southernmost States! - is this our slowest migrant? With more



records a clearer pattern will emerge, and the coming years will bring more detailed information about timing of migration of these and other species.

Most reported species

## **3**GREY WAGTAIL

### 558 records

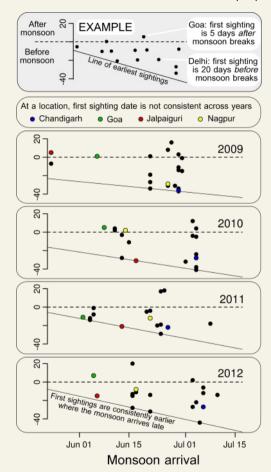
This is one of our most conspicuous migrants. Breeding in Himalayas and beyond, it spreads over the entire country during winter.



Pied Cuckoo Does the arrival of the Pied Cuckoo campaign herald the onset of the monsoon? The Pied Cuckoo Campaign was launched in 2009 to collect information to assess this age-old belief. More than 600 sightings of this wonderful migrant were contributed by over 200 MigrantWatchers; the first sighting dates among these were compared to monsoon arrival, as available with the Indian Meteorological Department. The results are fairly clear: Pied Cuckoos arrive before the monsoon in most parts of central and northern India (they are resident in southern India); but the degree to which their arrival precedes the monsoon varies from place to place. So, overall, the old belief is true! (Even though Pied Cuckoos are not very reliable predictors of the monsoon.)



Illustration: Sumit Sinha



## Notes from MigrantWatchers' diaries

## Notes from American sandpiper lands in Kerala!

In October 2011 MigrantWatcher Dr Jayan Thomas and his friend P C Rajeevan were birding in Ezhome near Cannanore in Kerala, when they spotted an unusual sandpiper that they couldn't initially identify. After consulting experts it turned



hoto: Jayan Tho

out to be a Buff-breasted Sandpiper, normally found in the Americas. It was an extremely rare sighting – only the third ever from South Asia!



## Hat-trick by one-legged wagtail!

MigrantWatcher T S Ganesh first saw and photographed a Grey Wagtail with one leg missing at his farm at Biligirirangan Hills (Karnataka) in 2007. He named it 'Kunta' (Kannada for 'lame'). Little did he know that Kunta would return again the following year...and the year after that! Considering

that the average lifespan of passerines like the Grey Wagtail is about 3 years, and that about 50% of these birds die young, Kunta's hat trick is certainly a remarkable feat for an individual with an incomplete set of feet.

# **MigrantWatch is** As the community grows, we **your project!** look forward to much greater

your project! look forward to much greater involvement from
MigrantWatchers. In addition to contributing sightings, we invite volunteers to help strengthen the project and increase its reach. If you have ideas for how to do this; or if you can spare some time in



helping it happen, please write to us at  ${\bf mw@migrantwatch.in}.$ 

Happy MigrantWatching!

# Most reported species



## 4

## **GREENISH WARBLER**

504 records

Heard more often than it is seen, this tiny bird travels thousands of kilometres to reach its wintering grounds in peninsular India from the Himalayas and across.



**What** "Whether it was luck or destiny, but...at the exact place I was pointing a Pied Cuckoo MigrantWatchers flew in and perched! ... It was a lifer for me..." - Udiyaman Shukla

**Say...** "Verditer flycatcher, black-naped oriole, greenish warbler, chestnut-tailed and rosy starlings visit the green patch outside, and I eagerly await their arrival " - Garima Bhatia



Common Kestrel | Photo: Avinash S Londhe

"I vividly remember each of my sightings, whether it is...the hunt by an Osprey...or the flight of over a hundred Demoiselle Cranes..." - Capt. Praveen Chopra

"If you keep a daily record of all the birds you will be surprised by what all you discover about them." - Roopa V.

"One of my most memorable experiences was my trip in the open ocean...we managed to see many pelagic species, including boobies, skuas and shearwaters." - Sachin Shurpali

"Nature has given birds its nicest colours and sounds – people should enjoy these." - Shantilal Varu

"Among migrant birds I am particularly keen on waders and warblers. The more challenging the species the more interesting I find it!" - Arun Bharos

"Sighting of the Buff-breasted Sandpiper...was the greatest birding moment of my life." This...had never before been reported from South Asia!" - Dr. Javan Thomas

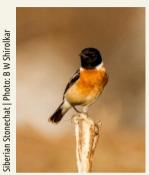
"We were so busy watching and counting birds that we didn't mind the fact that we had had no breakfast or lunch!" - Prathamesh Desai



Western Marsh Harrier | Photo: Avinash Bhagat

## State-wise list of contributors with number of records

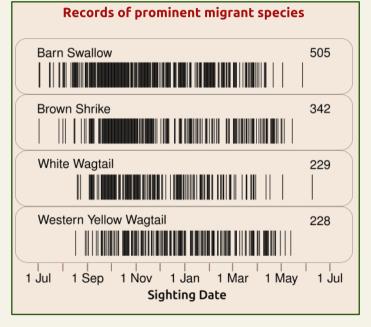
Figures after each name indicate the number of sightings contributed. Names of top two contributors from each state in **bold**.



ANDAMAN & NICOBAR Sachin Shurpali 21, ANDHRA PRADESH Anand Kalinadhabhatla 4, Anjali 7, Arjun Surendra 3, Arun Kumar 1, Ashwini Vaidya 2, Babu A 1, Bala CS Dasari 2, C Tom Hash 16, Kanwar B Singh 49, Chandrasekhar Bandi 1, Chitra Shanker 3, Durga Prasad 10, Garima Bhatia 1, Gubbala Ramakrishna Rao 2, Harish Bhat 9, Joby Joseph 19, Mike Prince 16, MS Kulkarni 3, Murali Krishna 1, P Gracious 3, Rajeev Mathew 19, Richa Bhake 1, S Prasanth Narayanan 6, Senthil Murugan 4, Sharada Annamaraju 5, Sheetal Vyas 1, Sivaji Anguru 7, Sreekar R 152, Suhel Quader 17, Suma Rao 1, Sumit Sinha 2, Suresh Jones 3, TV Krishnapriya 4,

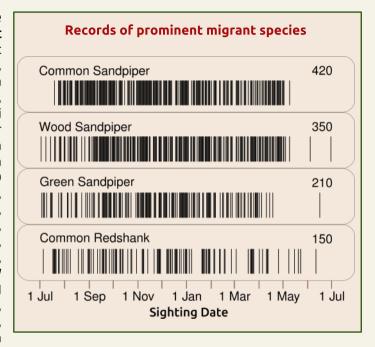
Umesh Mani 87, **V Santharam 156**, Venkatakrishnan Srinivasan 2, Vijay Sirdesai 2, Y Prakash Rao 3, Yanamadala Pratap Rao 2, Yashada Kulkarni 1, Yokesh 1, ASSAM Anush

Shetty 1, Bhaskar J Barua 1, Chandanjyoti Gohain 2, **Deepa Mohan 14**, Golap Gogoi 5, Kashmira Kakati 3, **Naresh Mitra 21**, Nimesh Ved 1, Oinam Sunanda Devi 3, Raj Kamal Phukan 1, Subhash Chanda 1, Tilak Chandra Sarmah 11, Udiyaman Shukla 2, **BIHAR Rahul Rohitashwa 2**, **CHANDIGARH** Kulbhushan Goyal 1, **Narbir Kahlon 26**, Navjit Singh 7, Rima Dhillon 5, Sarbjeet Kaur 1, **Vikram Jit Singh 37**, **CHHATTISGARH Arun M K Bharos 97**, **Dharmaraj N Patil 5**, **DAMAN & DIU Anirudh Chaoji 1**, **DELHI** A Shivaprakash 1, Chandra Bhushan 1, Dharmaraj N Patil 2, Raju Kasambe 2, Janaki Turaga 1, **Kanwar B Singh 41**, Kavi Nanda 2, Raman Kumar 5, Ramit Singal 24, Snigdha Kar 2, Sudhir Oswal 2, Sujata Ghosh 2, Sumit Kumar 2, Supriya Nair 1, Suresh C Sharma 1, Surya Prakash 1, **Udiyaman Shukla 549**, Vikram Jit Singh 1, **GOA** Akshay Surendra 1, Amit Bandekar 3, Divya Karnad 1, Raju Kasambe 1, **Fionna Prins 191**, Gaurang Shukla 1, Gosavi Paresh 5,



Jagdish Katkar 1, James Williams 6, Manoi Soman 7, Mike Prince 18. Paresh Gosavi 5. Pradnya Shenov 12. Prasanna Parab 5. Ramit Singal 36, Suyog Kamat 2, GUJARAT A Shivaprakash 140, Akshit Suthar 2, Aniket Bhatt 21, Anwar Turk 4, Arpit Deomurari 6, Ashvin Trivedi 10. Ashwin Pomal 3. Atul Kalaria 2. Bharat Jethva 2, Bhargav Joshi 7, Bhasmang Mehta 2, Bidyut Bikash Barman 1, Darashan Parikh 2, Dhaivat 6, Dharmaraj N Patil 4, Dipani Sutaria 2, Dishant Parasharya 9, Gaurang Shukla 1, Girish Jathar 11, Harsh Pandit S 8, Hiren Soni 37, Jaidev Dhadhal 2, Jayesh Bheda 5, Jayesh Patel 1, Jaypalsinh Jadeja 12, Jaysukh Parekh Suman 1, Kadambari Devarajan 12, Kapilsinh V Zala 22, KD Nimavat 7. Ketan Tatu 2, Kirti Kumar Mandalaywala 11, Krushankant D Baxi 3, Mahesh H Trivedi 1, Mahesh M Ghate 5, Maulik Varu 973, Nandita Amin 31, Nilamkumar R Patel 1, Nimesh Ved 5, Palak P Thakor 1, Palak Thakor 2, Prachi Mehta 3, Pradnyavant Mane 33, Pratap Sevak 10, Pratik 2, Pratik P Jain 12, Pritesh Patel 7, PS Thakker 5, Rajarajan 8, Raju Kasambe 154, RV

Devkar 4, Sagar B Shah 4, Sandip H Ramanuj 18, Sarav A Desai 3, **Shantilal Varu 1304**, Shivani Jadeja 5, Sneha Dharwadkar 1, Swadeepsinh

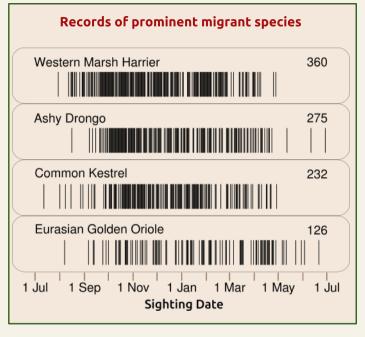


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Indian Pitta | Photo: Namita Tewari

Learning 1, Hopeland P 1, Rohit Gupta 2, Sumit Dookia 1. JHARKHAND Naresh Nanda 1, KARNATAKA A Ajit 6, A **Shivaprakash 1520**, Abhimanyu Lele 8, Akarsha BM 4, Akshay Surendra 1, Alakananda B 4, Alwan Sadagopan 2, Amit Kumar Singh 3, Amol Marathe 4, Anagh Purandare 2, Anand Krishnan 17, Ananth H V 2, Anjali Anantharam 2, Anto Christy 1, Anup B Prakash 2, Anup Prasad 1, Anush Shetty 71, Arun Kaulige 3, Arunava Das 6. Asha 1. Ashish G B 3. Ashish Parmar 1. Ashwin K M 1, Ashwini Kumar Bhat 3, Ashwini R 7, Balaji Narayanaswami 2, Bopanna Pattada 8, Bushra Mehkri 1, Centre for Learning 21, Chandrasekhar Bandi 6, Dayani Chakravarthy 2, Deepa Mohan 71, Dipu Karuthedathu 12. Divva Karnad 4. Dr SV Narasimhan 9. Vindhya Kumar C 1, Fauzia Arief 1, Ganesh Kumar YNV 2, Garima Bhatia 50, Garima Singhal 1, Gaurang R 1, Geetanjali Dhar 5, Girish Madpuwar 1, Gowri S 1, Gurunath Desai 3, Gurunath N Desai 2, Guruprasad Timmapur 10, Hari Sridhar 9, Harish Bhat 32,

Harish NN 3, Harsha J 3, Hitesh Chowhan 5, James Williams 103, JN Prasad 4, John Christo 1, Joy Ghosh 14, Kailash Prasad 2, Kamala Mukunda 1, Kannan A S 1, Karthick B

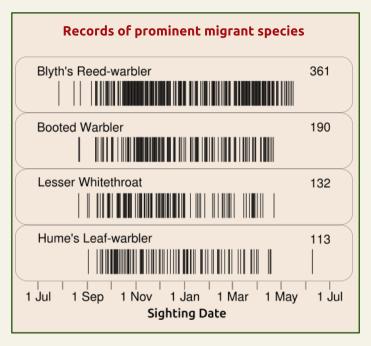


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Priya Singh 2, R Sharada 1, Radha Vijayaraghavan 1, Raghavendra Rao 2, Raghu Ananth 4, Rahul Jauhari 2, Rajah Jayapal 1, Rajeev GC 4, Rajesh Sachdev 1, Rakesh Gupta 1, Raman Kumar 2, Ramit Singal 144, Ravi Shankar Karedla 1, Rosita Sequeira 1, Roy Machia 2, S Subramanya 41, S Revathi 4, Saandip Nandagudi 3, Sachin Nayak 1, **Sachin Shurpali 437**, Sainath S Vellal 1, Samad Kottur 14, Samira Agnihotri 16, Sandeep R 3, Sandeep Somasekharan 1, Sangeetha Kadur 90, Sanjay Gubbi 4, Saptagirish Oleti 1, Sarada S 1, Seema Kotian 1, Shailaja 1, Sharada Annamaraju 1, Shivashankar 2, Shreeranga N 1, Shrikant Rao 1, Shrinivas KR 5, Shubham Srivastav 2, Shyamkumar Puravankara 3, Sindhu Rao 3, Sivasankar Chander 8, SK Srinivas 39, Sneha Vijayakumar 9, Sohel Mohamed 1, Somashekhar Hiremath 6, Sree Kumar 4, Srikanth Kumar GP 1, Suhel Quader 92, Suma Rao 16, Sumeet Moghe 1,

Sumesh PT 7, Sumit Sinha 3, Tanuja DH 4, TG Ravikumar 4, Tharangini 1, Thejaswi Shivanand 3, TS Ganesh 5, Uma K 18, Umesh Mani 4, Umesh Srinivasan 3, Uttara



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Prathamesh Desai 10, Rajasree Vasudevan 2, Rajesh M 1, Rajesh Ramnarayan 1, Raju Kasambe 2, Raju Sankaran 45, Ranjith Valsalan 1, Ratnakar J 2, Renju K Raj 2, Retheesh KR 1, Roopa V 38, S Prasanth 4, Sachin Shurpali 16, Saji Yohannan 1, Sandeep Das 7, Sandilya Theuerkauf 12, Sanju Verghese 7, Shaju Thomas 1, Shibi Moses 21, Shiran Kalappurakkal 1, **Shyamkumar Puravankara 101**, Smitha K Komath 3, Sreekar R 1, Sreekumar B 2, Suhel Quader 1, Udiyaman Shukla 2, Vignesh Menon 1, Vivek Chandran 2, Vivek Philip Cyriac 8, Yazdy Palia 11, Yesoda Bai R 1, LAKSHADWEEP **Anirudh Chaoji 1**, MADHYA PRADESH Anand Kumar Bhatt 2, Arpit Jain 7, Arun M K Bharos 1, Ashish Tiple 2, Ashok Sengupta 1, Ashutosh Barua 2, C Sashikumar 1, Dharmaraj N Patil 2, **Dipu Sasi 31**, Jayant Wadatkar 1, Raju Kasambe 7, Durgesh 8, Harish NN 1, **Harsha J 74**, James Williams 1, M Pathy 3, Patrick David 6, Pawan Dhall 3, Prachi Thatte 17, Rishi Sarma 1,

Uttara Mendiratta 1, Vaibhav Chaturvedi 4, Vrushal Pendharkar 5, MAHARASHTRA A Ajit 1, A Shivaprakash 40, Abheek Ghosh 1, Abhijit Narvekar 17, Adesh Shivkar 2, Aditya Joshi 3, Akshay



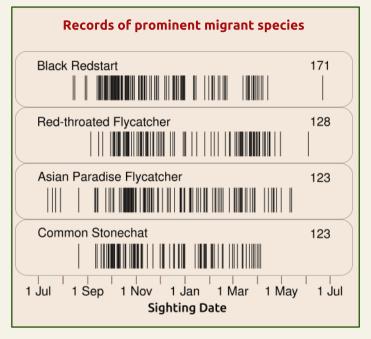
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Wadatkar 93. Joy Ghosh 6. Kadambari Devarajan 9. Kalpana Malani 12, Kamalakar Krishnaji Jaripatke 1, Kanwar B Singh 17, Kaustubh Pandharipande 8, Kedar Champhekar 34, Kedar Vasant Munishwar 4, Ketki Marthak 2, Kiran S Kadam 21, Kiran Srivastava 1. Kishor Gumaste 3. Kulbhushansingh Survawanshi 4. Kunal Manohar Patil 1, Rohit Gupta 2, Mandar Khadilkar 7, Mandar Pawgi 5, Mangesh Deherkar 8, Manoj N KulkarniSolapur 4. Mayuresh Khatavkar 12. Mihir R Kulkarni 10. Mohina Macker 12. Monali D Shah 3. Nandkishor Dudhe 14. Naren Raiani 7. Neeraj Deepak Gade 1, Nikhil 1, Nikhil Patwardhan 11, Nikhil Vijaykumar Gorde 2, Pallavi Ghaskadbi 2, Parag Deshmukh 1, Prachi Mehta 2, Prachi Pendyala 1, Pradnya Shenoy 10, **Pradnyavant Mane 296**, Prakash M Dudhalkar 2, Prashant Bhagat 3, Prathamesh Desai 216, Praveen J 2, Pravin S 1, Sawan M Deshmukh 1, Project Baravi 4, PV Pawar 1, Rahul Jauhari 2, Rahul Sachdev 9, Rajah Jayapal 5, Rajashree Khalap 1, Rajesh Sachdev



3, Rajit N 1, **Raju Kasambe 512**, Ravi Vaidyanathan 7, Rohan Chakravarty 1, Rohan Kamath 2, Rohit Charpe 2, Rudra Nayan Das 5, Rujuta Khare 1, Sahila Kudalkar

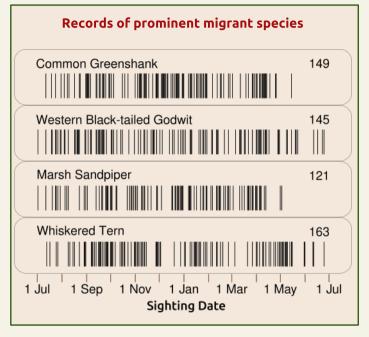


4, Samir Mehta 1, Sangeeta Dhanuka 15, Sanjeev B Nalavade 10, Sanjeev Nalavade 1, Saurabh Ashtamkar 5, Saurabh Ingale 3, Saurabh Pansare 5, Shantanu Deo 1, Sharad Dutt Apte 5, Shirish Mhatre 2, Shiva 1, Shriram Vaijapurkar 5, Shrivastava Jatin 11, Soham Mehta 1, Soumitra 1, Stephen Mark Salazar 2, Subhadeep Ghosh 4, Sudhanshu Kothe 1, Sudhir Moharir 1, Suhel Quader 6, Sumita Chaudhry 6, Sunil Kulkarni 2, Sushant Narayan Bhusari 3, Tarin Mithel 1, Tarique Sani 9, Tarun Balpande 23, Tejal Dhulla Vishweshwar 1, Tejinder Singh Rawal 1, Tushar Parab 5, Tushar Takale 4, Udayan Dharmadhikari 6, Uttara Mendiratta 3, Vandan Jhaveri 1, Veena PG 1, Vidyadhar Atkore 15, Vikram Anil Vyawahare 3, Vikram

Gupchup 14, Vinayak Krishna Patil 1, Vinod Patil 2, Vishal Bhave 5, Vishal Jadhav 2, Vishal V Jadhav 2, Vivek Kale 3, Yashada Kulkarni 1, Yashodhan Gharat 2, MANIPUR Oinam Sunanda Devi 2, Pawan Dhall 1, MEGHALAYA Udiyaman Shukla 2, MIZORAM C Lalchhandama 4, Nimesh Ved 38, Usha Lachungpa 1, NAGALAND Aparajita Datta 1, Nimesh Ved 4, ODISHA Aditya C Panda 30, Amlan Dutta 1, Bibhujeet Jena 1, Madhumita Panigrahi 3, Panchami Ukil 1, Sreekar R 7, Uttara Mendiratta 4, PUDUCHERRY Dipani Sutaria 1, KS Sheshadri 8, Latchoumanan Muthu Andavan 3, Nanda Ramesh 2, Sangeetha Kadur 6, Siva Ganapathy 1, Tara Gandhi 1, The Nature Trust 2, PUNJAB Kanwar B Singh 1, Manoj Kumar 5, Narbir Kahlon 50, Navdeep Sood 2, Snigdha Kar 1, Uttara Mendiratta 1, Vikram Jit Singh 7, RAJASTHAN AI Siddiqui 1, Ainsley Priestman 4, Amol Marathe 1, Ashwin Viswanathan 2,

Asian Brown Flycatcher | Photo: Sumit Sinha

Asif Khan 1, Dau Lal Bohara 7, **Garima Bhatia 43**, Girish Arjun Punjabi 1, Harishchandra N Mhatre 33, Jitendra Bhatia 4, Kanwar B Singh 20, Lima Rosalind 1, Naveen Karola 12, Pawan Dhall 1, Raj Gopal Singh Verma 1, Raju



Kasambe 2, Ramit Singal 22, Rohit Gangwal 5, Saandip Nandagudi 1, **Sachin Shurpali 189**, Sahas Barve 3, Sahdev Singh 32, Sarita Mehra 1, Satish Kumar Jain 3, Satya Prakash Mehra 18, Subhash Gogi 9, Sudhir Garg 1, Sumit Dookia 25, Sunil Singhal 5, Udiyaman Shukla 11, Uttara Mendiratta 1, **SIKKIM A Shivaprakash 3**, Dipankar Ghose 1, **Sreekar R 3, Usha Lachungpa 6**, **TAMIL NADU** A Rajaram 3, A Shivaprakash 37, Arun Kumar 8, Arun Lakshminarayan Govindarajulu 2, Asha 1, Ashish Ranjan 1, Ashwin Viswanathan 1, Atanu Mondal 1, BalaSundaraRaman L 1, C A S Chidambara Vinayagam 1, C Sashikumar 36, Chockalingam Selvaraj 2, Dipu Karuthedathu 3, Divya Mudappa 3, Gautham M G 2, Geetha Jaikumar 2, Gnanaskandan KesavaBharathi 63,

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