



Figure 1. Drawing of a white tiger as appeared in *The Orunodoi*¹⁰.

The history of white tiger in India can be traced in some of the paintings, which were drawn and recorded after 27 years of an incident in 1561 AD (ref. 8). However, the earliest authentic report of shooting of a white tiger in India is stated to be in 1907 (ref. 9).

Reports of white tigers in Assam are available. In Sivasagar District, Upper Assam, there is a tea estate called 'Bogabagh' meaning 'white tiger' in Assamese, and refers to two white tigers found there in the early 1900s (ref. 4).

Also, a report exists of the killing of a white tiger in Assam in March 1851. The unnoticed report is a much earlier record of the killing of a white tiger in India. According to *The Orunodoi*, a white tiger was beaten to death in Dibrugarh District, Assam and its head and skin were brought to 'Shrijut Doctor Sharlok Sahab'. The fur of the tiger was long and completely white without any spots¹⁰. The report is also supplemented with a drawing of the tiger (Figure 1). This may be the earliest authentic report of killing of a white tiger in India.

Capturing of a white tiger from Sadiya (District Tinsukia, Assam) during the Ahom King Kamaleswar Singha (1795–1811) is also mentioned in the report.

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TIKENDRAJIT GOGOI

*Department of Zoology,
D.H.S.K. College,
Dibrugarh 786 001, India
e-mail: tikendrajitgogoi1@gmail.com*

Chemicals management in India

As a signatory of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (2001), the Indian Government was compelled to restrict the production and use of industrial chemicals and pesticides. However, the present situation is not encouraging. This may be due to the following reasons: (1) Lack of awareness, information and education about chemical hazards and international treaties related to chemicals. Higher rate of illiteracy plays a major role in this context. (2) Absence of regulatory mechanisms to monitor chemical production and disposal. (3) Lack of a database to measure chemical impacts on health and environment. (4) Lack of on-site disaster

management plan in small-scale and medium-sized chemical industry. With respect to legislation regarding chemical management, India is well placed. In such a large country like India with its diverse spectrum of chemical manufacturing and consumption, laying of legislation is not an easy task. Proper execution is also required. This can be achieved by educating the people about chemicals and their impact on health and environment. Proper knowledge about pesticides and their effects on groundwater can prevent groundwater contamination. Increment of the inter-industry interaction and collaboration in discussing emerging scenarios after chemical

release, environmental impacts, expectation, and roles and resources pooling will prevent on-site chemical disaster. The thrust areas should be groundwater quality, chemical residue in food, public and occupational health, storage and disposal of obsolete chemicals, chemical poisoning and chemical accident during transportation.

BIMLESH KUMAR

*Department of Civil Engineering,
Indian Institute of Technology – Guwahati,
Guwahati 781 039, India
e-mail: bimk@iitg.ernet.in*