

WE NEED THEM, THEY WILL DO MUCH BETTER WITHOUT US

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Title: *Survival at Stake – How Our Treatment of Animals Is Key to Human Existence*

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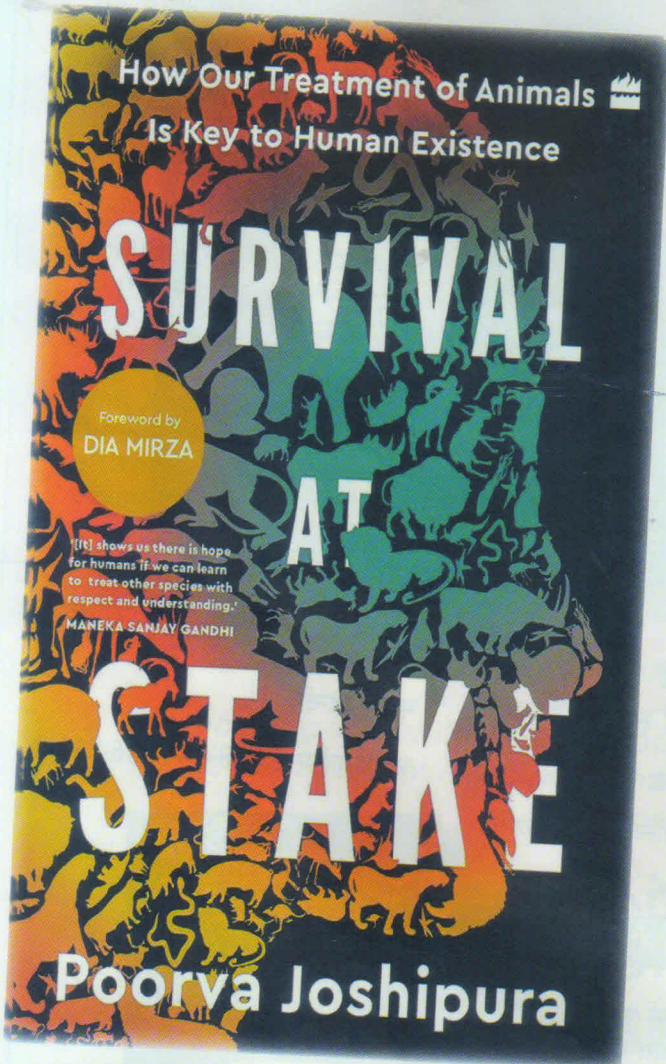
of timeless Nature, thereby desisting from lording over it. She posits COVID-19 as one of Mother Nature's warnings — hitting back at errant humans silently (but powerfully) through tortured and ill-treated animals as media. Those among readers who dabble in Environmental Life Cycle Assessment will at once notice that the book tightly couples two of the three end-point (damage) indicators — Human health and Ecosystem/Biodiversity loss, through the anthropospheric activity of wildlife trafficking (and culling) to satisfy a whole range of human needs.

Knowing that the vital roles the fauna plays silently in global ecosystems are indispensable for human existence is a pre-requisite for appreciating that we *Homo sapiens* owe our survival almost entirely to them!

Of COVID, SARS, MERS and more

Both COVID-19 and SARS originated in Chinese wet markets, where animals of different species, stacked in cramped cages, become pathways for dangerous viruses to reach unsuspecting humans. The author castigates the butchering of donkeys in Kenya, black and brown bears in Southeast Asia, and imported Amazonian yellow-footed tortoise offspring in China by misguided (and almost certainly devious) humans to extract body parts/fluids of supposedly medicinal value to fight COVID-19; and recalls that all civet cats were sterilised, electrocuted and burnt in China, post-SARS; just as chickens were massacred en masse in 1997 in response to a bird flu epidemic. She writes about dogs, monkeys, porcupines, deer and eels being sold in India in illegal open markets as food. Tracing the HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), which causes AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) to the SIV (Simian Immunodeficiency Virus) in Africa, in the second chapter, and attributing the breakout of HIV to human consumption of (infected) monkey meat and experimentation with monkeys as specimens in laboratories, she dexterously using a story-telling approach to lock readers in.

'Factory' farms (the focus of the third chapter), slaughtering over 92 billion land animals annually, have emerged to sate the ever-increasing appetite of humankind. The author notes that the pulverised remains of other (sometimes infected) animals are fed to livestock to cut costs, thus making cannibals out of otherwise vegetarian creatures. Pumping over 75% of all the antimicrobial drugs available in the global market into these animals has resulted in the



S*URVIVAL at Stake*, by Poorva Joshipura, has a 'moral, ethical, and practical force' as its soul, housed within the corpus of science. She wants readers to realise and accept that they are a small, evanescent but important part