

# Seminar puts spotlight on role of floral, faunal species

**HT Correspondent**

■ ludhiana@hindustantimes.com

**LUDHIANA** : A two-day national seminar on 'Environmental changes and their impact on faunal diversity in Indian agro ecosystems', organised jointly by Punjab Agricultural University and Zoological Survey of India, kicked off here on Monday. As many as 200 delegates from 10 universities from across the country are participating in the seminar.

## HIGHLIGHTING ROLE OF SPECIES

In his inaugural address, chief guest Kailash Chandra, director, Zoological Survey of India, highlighted the importance of each and every species, floral or faunal, towards balancing the agro ecosystem.

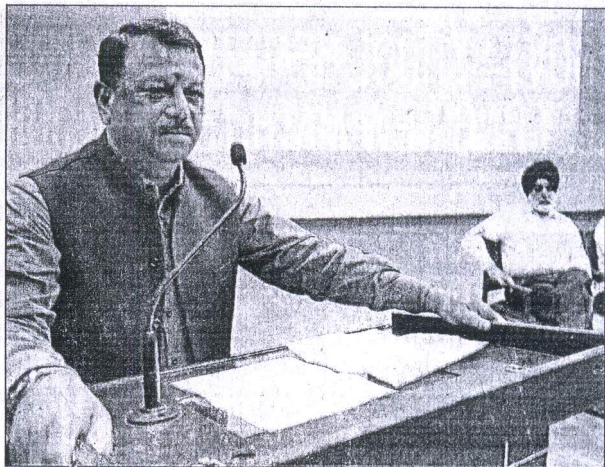
Elaborating the role of Zoological Survey of India in inventorying faunal species of the country, Chandra disclosed that out of 36 bio-diversity hot spots across the world, four are in India, making it one of the 17 most ecologically diverse countries in the world.

"We need to save biodiversity to prevent extinction of a large number of animal species, peculiarly prevalent in India, that form its major genetic resource," he remarked.

Chandra said Punjab has a documented number of 2,500 faunal species, which is a good number considering that a huge area of the state is under agriculture.

## TRACK CHANGES WITH SURVEYS'

Rodent specialist AMK Mohan Rao, Union ministry of agriculture, and consultant, FAO, stressed on the need of doing sur-



■ Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kailash Chandra, speaking during a national seminar on 'Environmental changes and their impact on faunal diversity in Indian agro ecosystems' at Punjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana on Monday.

HT PHOTO

veys to assess biological changes intrinsically and how they impact biodiversity of animals and human beings. "Time has come to develop ecological interventions without disturbing the environment," he said, while adding that research in this area would ultimately generate more employment leading to social security and a more aware public.

While delivering his presidential remarks, NS Bains, director research, PAU, discussed the impact of agriculture on faunal diversity. Referring to biodiversity as the basis of human existence, Bains highlighted how the extinction of any species causes loss of an energy and nutrient pathway forever and its larger impact on all life forms is not yet fully understood.

Highlighting PAU's efforts in shifting towards sustainable agriculture, Bains explained

how with the help of integrated pest management for controlling white fly, there was a decrease in the use of broad spectrum pesticides by farmers as they opted for targeted pesticides requiring fewer sprays. "This has led to restoration of a number of faunal species in the fields," explained Bains.

Earlier, Gurinder Kaur Sangha, patron of the seminar, and dean, College of Basic Sciences and Humanities, formally welcomed the dignitaries, university officers, delegates and guests.

In his introductory remarks, SS Hundal, professor and head, department of zoology, discussed the importance of faunal diversity with respect to agro ecosystems and how research to study impact of climate change on faunal and bio diversity is essential to attain a sustainable ecosystem.