

# Green guard honoured after death

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KOLKATA: He was the chowkidar (gate-keeper) of a forest bungalow at Mayur Jharna Elephant Conservation Zone of Kankrajhor. On September 19, 1999, when news reached the forest office that timber smugglers were active nearby, he had no reason to give chase. Yet, Madhu Manke was not one to sit back and watch. He joined the group of foresters who had set out to apprehend the smugglers but somehow got isolated. His body was recovered the next day, hacked to pieces by those he had gone to stop. On Saturday, his wife received the special award for exceptional performance in habitat conservation from Ashok Kumar, founder of Wildlife Trust of India. The award also called the Green Award is presented by The Jungles, a city based NGO, working for wildlife conservation. The award included a cash prize of Rs 11,000 and a shield.

The awards were set up in memory of Sukhdev Pariah and Aziz Qureshi, casual forest department



The ~~award~~ presenting Green Guard Awards in Kolkata on Saturday. **JUNGLES**

Jayanta Bhattacharyya

employees killed in 1999, on the line of duty, in a land mine blast, in Palamu. The awards are given for exceptional individual and team performance under the categories of anti-poaching operation, wildlife habitat conservation and best protected wildlife range.

For exceptional team performance in anti-poaching operations, the award was bagged by five officials of Periyar Tiger Reserve and 22 members of Ex Vayana Bark Collectors. The exceptional team performance award for wildlife habitat conservation was bestowed upon all members of the Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve. The foresters of Sariska Tiger Reserve walked away with the exceptional team performance award for best protected wildlife range.

The ceremony was presided over by Ashok Kumar who stressed upon the need to do more work in the 'field' rather than make long speeches at seminars. He also said that the foresters were facing a major resource crunch as well as a lack of proper training.