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Ensuring we spot paw prints in the eco system

AIRCEL'S compassion for tigers

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Protecting an eco system goes beyond the idea of the obvious, is a fact that has proven to be true right from the horizon of the civilisation's expansion. Tigers in our eco system have been dying out at a faster pace than their historic chase towards catching their prey. In the Indian context, Aircel's chapter on a survey of the decreasing numbers of tigers found the count of tigers to be around 1411 tigers in 2009. In this alarming find, Aircel's constant initiatives to help support and multiply the number of our national animal created a buzz in the country and continues to do so, with their innovative campaigns and measures.

A show stealer in this regard, was the Lakme Fashion Week, that took place in Mumbai. Our favourite cat was showcased all over the place through a diversity of inspirational motifs. The idea was to create awareness about tiger conservation capitalising on a segment of life that makes for most of our existence in today's date and time – fashion. Fashion was used as a platform to mark the descent and trail of the national feline – tiger; into a zone of endangerment and later celebrating Aircel's success in the increase in number of tigers since 2009. The number, namely - from 1411 tigers in 2009 has increased to 1706 tigers today. Then Aircel was only overjoyed that they could contribute to this difference in the eco system and in preserving the national pride of the country.

The Aircel 'Save our Tigers - Fashion for a Cause' was a fashion show, which aimed at promoting awareness regarding tiger

conservation through fashion – aimed primarily at the youth as a target audience. The initiative hoped in reaching out to the youth who pay close attention to fashion. The idea saw the ramp translate into a jungle where the tiger roared loud and fearless. The show styled by Aki Narula, witnessed Bollywood actress Neha Dhupia walking down the ramp with other models who wore garments inspired by the Tiger. Design collections by ace designers like Kallal Datta, Nachiket Barve, Arjun Khanna, Swapnil Shinde, Rocky S, Satya Paul and several others only added to the spectacle. Three best garments were chosen and awarded with a cash prize while the rest shall eventually be retailed with the proceeds going towards other tiger conservation initiatives.

Aircel invited and inspired several designers in the fashion fraternity to pour their creative spirits into the creation of such garments which were inspired by the tiger. The pathos of the endangerment of the species and the subsequent happiness with regard to the increase in its numbers over this short period of time, was summed up by Neha Dhupia. "We have all grown up listening to the stories of tigers and it is sad that our national animal is going towards extinction now. But at the same time, it is so good to know that Aircel is working tirelessly towards spreading awareness on tiger conservation giving us hope of seeing an increase in the number of tigers. I am obliged to be a part of this event today and am happy that I could contribute to this cause too. All of the designs today

were simply creative and so in line with the 'Save Our Tigers' spirit."

On commenting on Aircel's role in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility in the country, Ms. Brinda Malhotra, Head - Corporate Social Responsibility, Aircel, had the following responses:

1) What inspires Aircel to continuously strive for an effort which - namely - Tiger Conservation, centers around our eco system?

Ans. Aircel's Corporate Social Responsibility, strongly supports causes that have a societal and an environmental impact. This not only reiterates our belief of working with communities, their sustenance, but also places us as a brand that strongly believes in the future of India and its youth. Saving our Tigers would mean that we save our forests and all the creatures within them. Saving our forests would mean saving over 600 of our rivers that originate in our forests and that in turn would ensure the water security of our nation and its population. Over these last four years, Aircel has been able to extend invaluable support to the cause of saving our tigers in the various Tiger Reserves across the country in association with our partners such as WWF-India, WTI, Sanctuary Asia, WCT etc.

2) Aircel, as we have already seen in the recent past has well established itself as an ethical and moral brand, which believes in contributing to society. What in this respect are your future plans towards promoting your 'Save Our Tigers' campaign?

Ans. Aircel has partnered with NDTV and other prestigious NGOs to implement projects on grounds with 'Save Our Tigers'. On ground implementations involve developing and deploying Rapid Response Unit vehicles, revamping anti-poaching camps, training of foresters and various other activities revolving around tiger conservation. Recently, with an aim to extend our good will and on ground support towards the cause, we undertook initiatives such as 'Strokes for Stripes,' where we unveiled the limited edition 'Save Our Tigers' Calendar and the flag off of the 'Kids for Tigers Express' in Ranthambore. Also, in order to propagate tiger conservation among the youth of our country, we organise numerous 'Kids for Tigers' fests and rallies across cities in India. The response to these initiatives has only motivated us further to do more work towards this cause and reach out to everyone.