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# Heart surgeon trains his lens on wildlife wonders

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Mumbai:** While not using his surgical scissors and retractors to fix diseased hearts, cardiac surgeon Ramakanta Panda has been using his camera's lenses to create awareness about the need for wildlife conservation.

Thirty of his wildlife pictures are on display at the ongoing DCP Fourth Grand Annual Photography Exhibition 2019 at the Kala Bhavan in Thane (W) for a noble cause. "Proceeds from their sale will be used to buy animal ambulances," the doctor said. He has pledged to raise Rs7 lakh for an NGO that works for animal rights.

Every weekend when he isn't operating, he drives out of the city to shoot pictures and has created a portfolio of 10,000 pictures so far. Dr Panda took up photography accidentally. "Photography was initially limited to clicking pictures during family holi-



Anil Shinde

Dr Ramakant Panda will raise Rs7 lakh for an animal rights group

days. But over the years, it blossomed into a stress-busting hobby," said the doctor. He once waited for five hours to click the elusive spider hunter birds while the flamingos off Uran are among his favourite subjects.

His interest in wildlife photography stemmed from the feeling that many animals could be on the way to being endangered. "At one point in time, India had the richest

wildlife, but unfortunately in the last few decades, the wildlife population has decimated due to various reasons," said Dr Panda. Capturing their activity with his camera lens is a way of creating a legacy for future generations. He said his daughter egged him on to do something for animals. "She said there are enough doctors for humans, someone should pay attention to animals as well," he added.