



**Press release**

*For immediate release*

## **Rigby takes Corbett's iconic rifle back to India and makes donation to national park**

In a move that further illustrates how the hunting industry works hand-in-hand with conservation, British gunmaker John Rigby & Co. has donated a £20,000 pick-up truck to the Jim Corbett National Park in India to help conserve its endangered wild tiger population.

The multi-award-winning gunmaker backed up its gift with a recent high-profile tour of India to promote big cat protection worldwide. The tour also rekindled the legacy of one of Rigby's most famous clients: the revered conservationist and hunter, Jim Corbett. During the 1900s, Corbett was a key figure in establishing protection for India's wildlife, in recognition of which the country's first national park was named after him.

In front of more than 300 local people and dignitaries, Rigby's managing director, Marc Newton, presented a brand new Tata Xenon pick-up truck to Mr Samir Sinha, chief conservator of forests and director at Corbett Tiger Reserve, in Ramnagar, Uttarkhand on Monday 4 April. The 4x4 will help Corbett rangers deal with the greatest threat to the region's wild tigers – conflict in areas where human activities come into contact with the big cats' habitat. The importance of these efforts was tragically demonstrated just two weeks ago when a ranger was killed by a man-eating tiger.

To maximise publicity for this critical conservation work, Rigby gave members of the public an unprecedented chance to see one of Jim Corbett's most treasured possessions – his .275 Rigby hunting rifle, which after long negotiation with the British and Indian governments the firm was allowed to take back for the first time in nearly 70 years. This humble yet historic rifle was a constant companion when Corbett was tracking man-eaters, and was made by the firm in 1905. This bolt-action was presented to him in thanks for dispatching the man eating tigress of Champawat who to this day holds the record for the most number of human deaths at 436. Such is the legend of Jim Corbett, people flocked in their hundreds to see the rifle on display at events that made the front pages of 55 national newspapers, including the Times of India.

"The response was fantastic," commented Marc Newton, "Having this historic rifle with us meant that we were able to highlight Jim Corbett's conservation legacy – and the support it needs today – to people all across India, not just in his home province of Uttarkhand. His works, in particular his attitude to and respect for wildlife, had a huge influence on me when I was growing up and he was a key figure in Rigby's history. It's a rare privilege to be able to give something back like this and I hope that it will help secure a future for the environment that this extraordinary man cared about so deeply."

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