



**INDIAN WILD ELEPHANTS CAPTURE AND TAMING HOLISTIC VIEW  
AND  
INVESTIGATION FINDINGS ABOUT THE INNOCENT WILD ELEPHANT CAPTURED  
IN AGALI, KERALA, INDIA**



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### **About us:**

Elsa Foundation is a non-profit charitable trust that focuses on the conservation of biodiversity, prevention of cruelty to animals and animal rights issues of both domestic and wild animals. It opposes keeping wild animals in captivity.

We have travelled to several countries to study best practices and implement them in India.

The foundation supports various government bodies, in informed policy-making and decision-making on critical issues impacting biodiversity and the rights of animals.

Our work areas are research, advocacy, awareness, publication, support in policy and decision-making.

**Website:** [www.elsafoundationcharity.org](http://www.elsafoundationcharity.org)

**Front cover:** Wild elephant brutally attacked without food and water, for 18 days and killed by government staff of Chhattisgarh (Image by Mike Pandey)

**Back cover:** Agali wild elephant locked inside kraal (timber cage) for taming (Image by Mathrubhumi (Press))

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## **PART-I: Holistic View**

### **Background**

In many Human-Elephant conflict situations in India, wild elephant capture, brutal taming and lifelong captivity is followed as a norm. Such capture and taming of adult elephants and keeping them in lifelong captivity is not evidenced in Africa. This seems to be one of the worst practices in India, which is blindly followed without thinking about any alternate strategies. This practice does not add any value to the conservation of species (or) the individual animal and causes huge damage to biodiversity. Several millions of public money are spent on maintaining these captive elephants, without any purpose (or) conservation goals.

These captive elephants are also sold for illegal commercial activities. In Africa in similar HEC situations, translocation of large groups (female families & male friends) is considered as a norm. Unfortunately, translocation is rarest of rare in India. The forest department which is supposed to be the protector of the species had turned into a destroyer in such cases. Elsa Foundation has been opposing this practice and has been presenting its objection to the government as well as in the courts in multiple instances.

### **Types of cruelty in the capture and taming process:**

#### **Stage 1: Capturing:**

The elephants are darted with anaesthetics and while they are unconscious ropes are tied around their legs and neck. The other ends of the ropes are tied to Kumki elephants (tamed bull elephants used for capturing other elephants). When the elephant becomes conscious, in a semi-sedated condition (or) in a fully conscious condition the Kumkis are forced to attack it and drag it to the spot of the transport vehicle.

#### **Stage 2: Loading**

The captured elephant is forcefully loaded into a truck by repeated attacks by the Kumki elephants. There are cases in which direct head-on collisions with the captured elephant and Kumkis are made. This is the second stage of cruelty that may cause serious skull injury, and damage to the eyes and tusks of not only the captured elephants but also to the Kumki elephants.

#### **Stage 3: Unloading & Reloading**

In this stage, the elephants undergo the same torture as described in the loading stage. Adding to the torture, the animal is again reloaded into a Kraal using the same brutal methods.

#### **Stage 4 Taming of Captured Elephant**

This is a prolonged process of torture in which the elephant may be kept in a small wooden cage (Kraal) for about a year (or) Chained on all legs for several months (or) a year. In this condition of predicament, multiple elephant keepers repeatedly attack the elephant at various parts of the body inflicting serious pain. Apart from the attacks, the animal is deprived of food and water to break the spirit and make an adult wild elephant to obey the commands of the elephant keepers.

## Physical & Mental Damage caused:

The above process of capturing, dragging the elephant to the vehicle and then forcefully loading it, unloading it and reloading it (into Kraal) is an unimaginable cruel process causing serious physical & mental damage not only to the captured elephant but also to the Kumki elephants used in the process. Making the captured elephant stand in a small cage for a year (or) tying it with chains on all legs, for a year, destroys its vital health conditions, as in the wild the elephants walk up to 20 kms a day. Elephants need plenty of exercise which is only possible by such long-distance movement every day. The damage caused to the animal is not documented by anyone in India.

## Government staff killing elephants by barbaric taming:

In multiple incidents, in the above-mentioned barbaric taming process, the elephants are killed by government staff (the keepers). Here is a partial list of elephants that are killed in the taming process.

**Note:** ‘State’ in the below paragraphs means ‘Province’

**2003:** A young bull elephant was chained and beaten for 18 days and was killed by Chhattisgarh State Forest Department staff. As per eyewitness statements, a total of 18 elephants were killed in this manner in Chhattisgarh, within a year.

**2006:** In Peppara sanctuary in Kerala state, a wild male elephant (nicknamed as Kola Kolli) was killed inside the cage during taming.

**2013:** A pregnant elephant was captured from Thiruvannmalai (Tamil Nadu state) and brutally attacked inside the kraal at Mudumalai. The elephant delivered a calf prematurely and the calf died very soon

**2015:** Three wild elephants were captured in Sindu-Durg district of Maharashtra state. During the brutal taming process, two of them were killed inside the cage in Maharashtra.

**2016:** The wild elephant captured in Madukkarai, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu state, nicknamed as ‘Madukkarai Maharaj’ was killed inside the Kraal (cage) at Varagaliyar forest department camp, two days after it was captured. This animal had suffered multiple fractures on its skull, broke its tusks and multiple other injuries while trying to free itself from the kraal.

**2018:** Juvenile male elephant separated from its mother and was killed while it was brutally attacked for taming, in Sidhi forest, Madhya Pradesh state

**2019:** A bull elephant around 35 years old (called “Bin Laden”) was killed in the brutal capture and taming process in Assam.





## **Wild Asian Elephant Tortured to Death**

**NEW DELHI, India, March 6, 2003 (ENS) -**

An endangered wild Asian elephant caught in a management program sanctioned and paid for by a state government in India, has died at the hands of its captors. The torture that claimed its life, and the death itself, was filmed by an award winning crew hired by the state to document its elephant management program, according to the International Fund for Animal Welfare and its Indian partner the Wildlife Trust of India.

Environment and wildlife filmmaker Mike Pandey's crew recorded the animal's treatment and death while covering the elephant program in the central Indian state of Chattisgarh.

The TV crew had been commissioned to film the \$76,000 project by the regional government, which sponsored the work to manage human-elephant conflicts. The government attempts to manage these conflicts by capturing wild elephants displaced by interaction with humans and taming them to become working animals.

In a statement today, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) described the torture to which the young bull elephant was subjected. "The wild Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) was first captured by lasso before being tied down and having its tusks hacked off with a saw, while being repeatedly jabbed with spikes and hit with bamboo rods. It was later denied food and water, and eventually died of stress, starvation and thirst after 18 days," IFAW said.





TAMIL NADU

## Elephant delivers calf in a krawl in Mudhumalai camp

P. Oppili and

CHENNAI/UDHAGAMANDALAM, JUNE 05, 2014 00:00 IST

UPDATED: JUNE 05, 2014 05:41 IST



In a shocking incident, a female elephant in the Theppakkadu elephant camp in the Mudhumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) was delivered of a calf inside a krawl (a wooden enclosure where captured wild elephants are confined for training) on midnight Tuesday.



## Forest staff attacked a pregnant elephant and killed the calf

This case can be seen as an example of a complete lack of any basic level of ethics and a case that seriously violates the animal welfare laws of the country.

2013 – Six elephants were captured from Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu state. The captured herd of six elephants were forcefully separated and 3 elephants were sent to Topslip camp and 3 were sent to Mudumalai Theppakkadu camp.

One of the captured elephants was pregnant. In spite of this condition it was confined inside a kraal and was attacked brutally. The elephant gave birth to a calf, at a premature stage, inside the Kraal. **The calf died soon after it was born.**

Within three years, among the three elephants sent to Theppakkadu camp, two died (Narmadha (age 25) & Bharathi (age 9)) in the same month (Dec. 2016) due to illness.

Had these elephants been translocated as a single group (including all members) to a suitable wild habitat, they might not have faced such a tragic end at this young age and might not have lost a calf.

Basically the forest staff killed the calf by brutal attack on the pregnant mother and creating a scenario of premature delivery.

## What happens post-taming?

The elephants are kept in lifelong captivity at government forest camps. They are subjected to various forms of cruelty on a daily basis. The condition of these elephants in Kerala is worse, as they are chained on multiple legs and are made to stand like statues, 24 hours a day, for their entire life.

Many elephants were sold to temples (which is illegal) and it turn the temples sell them to private owners for commercial activities (which is again illegal).

In temples, female elephants that normally live with their natal herds for their entire life, are isolated and till their death are forced to live in solitary confinement and never given a chance to live their natural social life.

Temple elephants are made to perform an unnatural act of begging for money, from devotees. This repeated action is done several hundred times a day creating enormous stress to the animal.

The captive male elephants are chained on all legs for several months during musth. The movement is completely arrested during musth. Post musth the elephants are brutally attacked by keepers, to show their dominance, as the keepers believe that musth had made it aggressive.

In Tamil Nadu state, due to the excessive selling of young female elephants from forest camps, the male: female elephants ratio is skewed, so there are negligible heads of females at prime reproductive age.

Chained and isolated elephants undergo enormous psychological damage. Repeated head bobbing and repeated swinging of the body among captive elephants is an indication of psychological damage.

## **Violation of laws by government officials:**

1) Keeping an elephant under confinement and subjecting it to a brutal taming process violates “The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960”

2.) Section 11 of “Wildlife Protection Act 1972”, which states

*“Provided further that no such captured animal shall be kept in captivity unless the Chief Wild Life Warden is satisfied that the animal cannot be rehabilitated in the wild and the reasons for the same are recorded in writing.”*

*“Explanation.\_ For the purpose of Clause (a), the process of capture or translocation as the case may be of such animal shall be made in such manner as to cause minimum trauma to the said animal.”*

3.) Selling elephants to temples is illegal

**Note:** Elephant is classified as a highly endangered Schedule I species. Even though the killing of a Schedule I animal may lead to several years of imprisonment, none of the forest department officials are convicted for the crimes mentioned above.

## **Serious damage caused by fake conservationists:**

In multiple incidents, people considered to be the senior scientists in elephant research in India have done enormous damage to the wild elephants by ill-advising the governments to capture and tame the wild elephants.

In multiple instances, in the courts, when a genuine “Public Interest Litigation” is filed by anyone with real concern for the elephants, the government justifies the captures using his name saying “This senior scientist had advised a capture, so we did it”.

Even though such fake conservationists may come with a thousand explanations, the reality is, that not a single conservationist in the African continent has ever suggested a capture, taming and captivity as a solution for HEC in Africa.

One of the arguments placed by such fake scientists in India is “Africa has a large undisturbed elephant habitat, so the animals can be translocated in Africa”, but the truth is, even the headcount of elephants is several thousand times higher in Africa when compared to India, which nullifies this argument. For example, the small country Botswana has about 130 thousand (1,30,451) elephants (2014-15 survey), when compared to a large country like India which has only about 27,312 elephants (as per census published in 2017) and still not a single wild elephant capture, taming is done in Botswana.

Apart from the above facts, various reasons for HEC in India (sample reasons provided in this document) reveal that the primary root cause for HEC is due to human-created problems and the elephants have a very minimal role to play in this.

This person is repeatedly causing serious damage to wild elephants, to be in the good books of government officials and gain special access to forests for more research work on elephants, gain special privilege to execute government projects etc., which in turn converts to more revenue for his organisation and more reputation for him.

Even the incidents of elephant herd captures in Hassan, Karnataka and Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu mentioned in this document were done as per such fake scientists' advice.

Whatever may be the argument, the barbaric act of wild elephant capture, brutal taming and lifelong captivity cannot be justified.

## **Comparing with African methods:**

When compared to the African method of elephant capture for translocation, it is really shocking to know the enormous difference between the approaches followed.

In the Indian method cranes are never used, the reason given is “The Indian terrain is very rough to take the crane”. However, in the majority of the capture cases, the elephants were captured in areas that are easily accessible by cranes.

Even if the spot of tranquillizing the elephant is not accessible by cranes, at least using cranes at the loading point could have reduced the trauma to a very large extent.

In Africa, the concept of the Kumki elephant is not there, but in India, special focus is given to converting captive male elephants into Kumkis (or) purchasing Kumkis from other states (or) sending elephants to other states for brutal Kumki conversion process.

Indian government never invested money in enhancing the infrastructure of capture operations by purchasing cranes and modern transport vehicles.

In India, several millions of public money are wasted in managing captive elephant facilities. This money could have been invested in installing hanging solar fences.

Indian government never engaged African translocation experts for these capture operations (or) did translocations as a large group.

In Malawi, a small country in Africa (118,484 square km and ranked 98<sup>th</sup> in size among all countries) which is 32 times smaller than India, the world's largest elephant translocation (500 elephants) was done successfully.



## Videos comparing the Indian method and African method:

**Warning:** The Indian video footages have highly disturbing visuals

**India:** Capture and brutal killing of wild elephant in Chhattisgarh state

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bG103hHkUU>

**India:** Capture of wild elephant herd in Hassan, Karnataka state

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mIzl-zlPEyM>

**India:** A glimpse (not the complete process) of taming of an elephant, Karnataka.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sy9jtXo\\_LTI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sy9jtXo_LTI)

**Africa: Malawi:** Elephant capture & translocation in a humane way.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtoOxLbL7sA&t=os&index=3&list=PLe1Es6Nmi2mjNpFqK\\_gFCGvw27-QGcSU1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtoOxLbL7sA&t=os&index=3&list=PLe1Es6Nmi2mjNpFqK_gFCGvw27-QGcSU1)

In a similar method shown in this video, African Parks did the world's largest elephant translocation of 500 elephants in a small country (Malawi) in Africa

## Photos comparing Indian method and African method:

Please refer pictures given in the **Appendix**

**End of PART-I      PART-II follows.....**

## PART – II: Investigation Findings & Recommendation

### Purpose of this investigation:

This investigation explores various factors that led to the capture of a wild elephant from Agali in Kerala, India. It connects the dots and gives a holistic view of the real reasons for Human-Elephant conflict in this forest region. Based on the facts discovered, this report suggests alternate solutions and provides recommendations.

**Details about the elephant captured:** A wild male elephant (Named Peeliandi by Agali village people and later renamed as Chandrasekaran by forest officials) was captured from Agali forest area, Attapadi block, Kerala on 30th May 2017 by government forest officials, after a certain group of public demanded the removal of this elephant.

**Media publicity made by the forest department:** The Forest department made an allegation on this elephant, that it had killed seven people within a year (April 2016 – March 2017). The elephant was branded as a serial killer and rogue and was captured. Wide publicity in the media was given by the forest department with the above allegations.

**Post capture:** The elephant was kept at a government elephant camp at Kodanadu, Kerala, inside a small kraal (Timber cage) and was subjected to a brutal & barbaric taming process. The confinement inside this small cage for a year has caused serious irreversible damage to its physical & psychological wellness (The details of the damage caused are explained in PART-I). In Kerala, such wild elephant capture and taming has become a regular activity.

### Facts found in the investigation

#### Attapadi-UNESCO world heritage site for biodiversity:

Attapadi block, where the elephant in question was captured, is a dense rainforest of 735 square kilometres and one-third of it is also a protected **Reserved Forest**. Attapadi is part of Nilgiri Biosphere, India's first international biosphere. Nilgiri sub-cluster is part of the Western Ghats (mountain chain).

Western Ghats and its sub-clusters are declared as **UNESCO World Heritage sites for their biodiversity**. A significant characteristic of the Western Ghats is the exceptionally high level of biological diversity and endemism. This mountain chain is recognized as one of the **world's eight 'hottest hotspots'** of biological diversity.

Apart from the above **Attapadi is part of the "Nilambur Elephant Reserve" declared by Project Elephant**, Government of India. Attapadi is in the range of important Western Ghats biodiversity clusters such as Silent Valley National Park, Mukurthi National Park, New Amarambalam Reserved Forest, Kalikavu Range, Nilambur Reserved Forest, Siruvani Hills and Coimbatore Forest Division.

Multiple rivers such as Bhavani, Kunthi, Chaliyar, Karimpuzha and Siruvani and their multiple tributaries flow in this range. **The appendix** displays the Nilgiri sub-cluster (which includes Attapadi) in the Western Ghats map. Attapadi is divided into three gram panchayats

named as Agali, Pudur and Sholayur. Attapadi is a prime elephant habitat and an important migratory route for elephants. **The density of elephants in this Nilgiri Biosphere is one of the highest in Asia (Max 2.4/ sq km)** (Sukumar and Baskaran 2015).

### **Only two accidental fatalities were caused by the elephant captured:**

On a detailed investigation, it was discovered that there were only two fatalities (that too accidental) that are related to the elephant in question.

**Fatality1: Mr. Peeliandi (aka) Thamandan Age: 75 Hamlet: Moochukadavu**

#### **Reason for fatality:**

Mr. Peeliandi under the influence of alcohol, in an inebriated condition came in front of elephant and blocked its way, when the forest officials and the public were chasing the elephant using crackers and loud noise. In the commotion, the elephant had attacked Mr. Peeliandi for self-defence.

**Fatality 2: Mrs. Meenakshi Age: 91 years Hamlet: Sambarcode**

#### **Reason for fatality:**

When the elephant was gracing near Mrs. Meenakshi's home, she was standing in front of her home. There was a huge horn noise, from a vehicle. This startled the elephant and it ran back, and in the said process, hit Mrs. Meenakshi, injuring her and causing her eventual death. The case was not one of an actual elephant attack, but more of an accident.

It can be seen that both these cases are more of accidents than deliberate cases of elephants attacking the people. The elephant was terrified due to either the huge noise or due to chasing people. The misfortune of the individuals being at the wrong place at the wrong time has caused the deaths.

### **All other fatalities are due to various other elephants**

Other several cases of fatalities in Attapadi block (735 sq. kms) between Jan 2012 to May 2017 (5-year period), being now attributed to the elephant in question are actually caused by various other elephants.

**Case 1 - Karayur hamlet:** In 2016 a shepherd (Mr. Manivelan) was sitting at an elephant pathway near the forest. He was deaf. A female elephant with its calf was very close to him and he did not move away and the elephant had hit him.

**Case 2 - Vachapathy hamlet:** A mentally challenged man was roaming in the forest in the evening. A female elephant with its calf was very close to him and the fatality happened.

**Case 3 - Vellakulam Hamlet:** People were chasing a male elephant and an old lady about 60 years of age came across the elephant and, in that commotion, for self-defence, was hit by the elephant.



**Case 4 - Palaya Thuvai Hamlet:** Three fatality cases (Mr.Vellingiri, Mr.Murugan, Mr.Kalliappa) in the past several years due to accidental close encounters with various elephants.

**Case 5 - Chavadiyur hamlet:** The fatality of Mr. Maruthachalam had happened late in the evening. No one had seen the elephant that attacked.

**Case 6 - Mundan Parai hamlet:** A deceased person named Mr. Yoseph Thonayil aged about 65 years, accidental encounter with a male elephant when he went to grace cattle near his home.

**Case 7 - Goonchiyur Hamlet:** Two deaths were reported in 2017. In the first case, an old man was attacked, while he was gracing his cattle inside the core forest, where elephants live. The second case was about a drunkard old man, who voluntarily went in front of the elephant that was standing in front of his home.

The above deaths happened over a span of 5 years. In all the above cases the elephant in question was not involved, as per the statements by the hamlet members. In two cases the elephants were female elephants and in one case there was no eyewitness. ***All the above facts conveyed by the Hamlet people are recorded in video.***

## **Primary reasons for human fatalities in Attapadi**

There are five primary reasons for human fatalities due to elephants in Attapadi

- 1) There are astonishing numbers of hamlets (*Total 196*) inside the core rain forest (which is also an elephant reserve) and the chances of people encountering elephants are very high.
- 2.) Large-scale encroachment of non-tribal people (*57%*), leading to increased human settlement in elephant habitats.
- 3.) Extensive agricultural practices are found inside core forest areas destroying the elephant habitat. Crops, plants that are preferred by elephants are cultivated, these are the primary reasons for crop loss and due to this contact frequency of elephants and humans has increased to a high level.
- 4.) Very high level of alcohol addiction (*116 people died within 2 years*).
- 5.) Grazing cattle in core elephant migratory path and habitat.

### **1. Astonishing number of hamlets (196) inside forest area**

On one hand **Attapadi** forest range is declared as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** for its immense biological diversity and also declared as an **Elephant Reserve** by Project Elephant of the Indian Government, on the other hand, it is the **largest tribal settlement area in Kerala**. There are an astonishing number of 196 hamlets in the Attapadi forest area. This leads to an increased frequency of people coming in contact with elephants.

## **2. Large-scale encroachment by non-tribal people:**

According to the government census done in the year 2011, Attapadi's total population is 64,318, in the **Tribal population is 27,627 (43%) and the non-tribal population – is 36,691 (57%)**. This clearly indicates that large-scale encroachment of non-tribal people had happened inside the forest area. These hamlets inside the forest cause huge obstructions for elephants to move among forest ranges. The above facts lead to high-level human-elephant conflict. (Hosetti 2005; Arin Ghosh, Baskaran and Sukumar 2007)

### **2a) Lack of tolerance towards wildlife among non-tribal people**

From the news publication provided in “Appendix 3” and from the detailed research report published on the tolerance level of people towards wildlife at the edge of Mudumalai Tiger Reserve Tamil Nadu (Tarsh 2010) it is evidenced the tribal people have enormous tolerance towards wildlife and they have a lifestyle of co-existence with wildlife. The tolerance level is very negligible among non-tribal people, who have encroached on the forest lands for economic benefits. These non-tribal people exhibit a sense of dominance over wildlife and regularly get into agitation and demand for removal of wildlife from the area.

## **3. Extensive agricultural practices & Crops preferred by elephants**

Extensive agricultural practices in Attapadi and Nilambur forests considerably narrowed down the habitat for free movement of elephants (Arin Ghosh, Baskaran and Sukumar 2007). Regarding the types of crops cultivated, in the “Crop loss payment records” maintained by the forest department, in the claims made by Ms. Valsala and by Mr. Rangaswamy, the record mentions banana and coconut cultivation. The report “Human-Wild Elephant Conflict in Agali Forest Range” prepared by Mannarkad Forest Division, gives the list of crops and fruits that are cultivated. Most of them are preferred by elephants. The above artefacts clearly state that many crops and fruit species preferred by elephants are cultivated in this forest range.

## **4. Extreme high numbers of alcohol abuse cases:**

A report on alcohol abuse in Attapadi by the Union Ministry of Rural Development, published in 2016 says “**116 people died in 2 years in Attapadi, due to alcohol abuse. It also quotes that 350 people inspected had mental disorders due to excessive use of alcohol, and drugs and there are huge numbers of people with mental illness in Attapadi.**” As mentioned in the earlier section of this report, in two cases of human fatalities due to elephants in Attapadi, the victims were under the influence of alcohol and came in front of the elephant and lost their lives. **Victim no 1:** Mr. Peeliandi (aka Thamandan) from Moochukadavu hamlet. **Victim no 2:** Elderly Man from Goonjiyur hamlet. The Hamlet members' video statements confirm the facts in the above two cases.










## Violation of law and rules in this case:

Apart from the violations described earlier in PART-I of this document, a High Court order was issued in July 2017, which directed the forest department, not to tame this elephant. Despite this order, the elephant was tamed by brutal methods.

## Hanging Solar Fences is a solution to HEC

Elsa Foundation suggests hanging solar fences as a solution to this issue.

Refer to the detailed study done by the foundation about this technology. The report can be downloaded from the foundation's website.

	   
	
	<b>Hanging Solar Fences, Sound Alerts, Warning Lights</b>
	
	<b>A solution for preventing “elephants entry into agricultural fields   human fatalities   animal killings” and enhancing the welfare of captive elephants</b>



## Conclusion & Recommendations:

In the investigation about human fatalities due to elephants in 5 years (between Jan 2012 and May 2017) the people in the hamlets say that the fatalities are due to various other elephants and not due to the elephant in question. Out of the seven hamlets in which fatalities occurred, in two cases the elephants that were involved in fatality were female elephants. In one case there was no eyewitness of the elephant involved.

Attapadi block is 735 square kilometres. In the Kerala Forest Chief Wildlife Warden's order to capture this elephant, it is mentioned that the elephant in question, had restricted its movement to Nellipathy hamlet. This elephant was not radio-collared to monitor its movement with GPS systems. The incidents of human deaths occurred at multiple places in this 735 square kms and on different months & years. All the above facts confirm that the deaths were caused by multiple elephants. Tagging all deaths and all the crop loss incidents to this one elephant is a very clear case of false claims and forged information.

Various facts mentioned in this report about extensive agricultural practices inside elephant habitats, large-scale encroachment by non-tribes in the forest, non-tolerance of wildlife among non-tribal people, alcohol abuse etc. have led to high levels of conflicts, in which the elephants do not play any role, and is purely human created problems. These problems need to be addressed on a very high priority by various government bodies involved.

In this case, framing an elephant as a culprit, capturing it and keeping it in lifelong captivity seems to be more of a knee-jerk reaction to public outcry.

Such elephant-taming practice is not evidenced in Africa. At present such barbaric taming and lifelong captivity seems to be one of the worst practices in India, which is blindly followed without considering any alternate approaches. This practice does not add any value to the conservation of species (or) the individual animal.

Kerala forest department could have prevented so many human deaths in Attapadi if they had implemented the International Green Oscar award-winning "Elephant Early Warning System", which was successfully implemented in Valparai (Tamil Nadu) and Hassan (Karnataka). The government pays a compensation of 5 lakhs (Five hundred Thousand) rupees for every human death. This money could have been diverted for implementing preventive measures and addressing the root cause of issues.

Wildlife plays a very important role in the sustainability of forests that are lungs of this earth. They disperse seeds, pollinate flowers and provide natural manure for forest growth. The trees provide oxygen and rain for drinking water plus agriculture purposes. Conserving wildlife is of utmost importance, as directly impacts the survival of the human species.

Regular removal of adult male elephants from Indian forests has led to a skewed male-to-female ratio among elephants and has a serious negative impact on biodiversity and elephant conservation.

A Kerala high court order issued in July 2017 prohibits the taming of this elephant. Despite this order, the elephant was tamed using barbaric methods. The cruel taming process on this elephant needs to be stopped immediately.

As suggested in this report, the following has to be implemented on the highest priority and importance

- Hanging Solar Fences need to be installed in all HEC areas (Ref: report published by the foundation)
- Non-forest activities inside the forest, encroachment inside the forest have to be stopped immediately
- Elephant habitats need to be preserved with the highest importance and priority.
- Illegal settlements inside the forest need to be removed

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- <https://500elephants.org/> (“African Parks” website providing details of world’s largest elephant translocation in Malawi, Africa.)
- Tarsh Thekaekara 2010, Dissecting the 'Human' in Human-wildlife Conflict, Comparing levels of Tolerance to Wildlife among different ethnic communities living at the edge of the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, South India
- IUCN guidelines for translocation of elephants in Africa

## Appendix Follows.....

-  Photos of barbaric capture & taming in India
-  Photos of humane capture and release in Africa
-  Map of the Western Ghats & Nilgiri Biosphere
-  Tribal people from the Attapadi forest range (home range of captured elephant) visiting the elephant kept inside the Kraal.



# Appendix 1: India Elephant Capture and Taming Photos

Barbaric capture operation

Photos by Kalyan













## **Barbaric taming of wild elephants** (pictures by Kalyan)

The first step towards slavery is the brutal attack on elephants by multiple forest department mahouts for several months to break the wild spirit and instil a fear of humans so that the wild elephant starts obeying human commands.

### **Three mahouts attacking the elephant at the same time**



### **Unable to bear the pain the elephant climbs onto the cage with its hind legs**





**Poking sensitive areas near eyes (Picture: Kalyan)**



**Fear and unbearable pain reflected in eyes (pic from another Asian country)**











**Heavily swollen front leg  
due to barbaric beating  
during taming.**

**Such barbaric acts lead to  
the animal being  
permanently handicapped**

Photo by WRRC



## Appendix 2: Humane Capture and Group Translocation-Africa



**Picture1:**  
Lifting darted  
animal using a  
crane

**Picture2:**  
Loading in  
another  
vehicle for  
long-distance  
travel





**Picture 3: Humane unloading (Africa)**



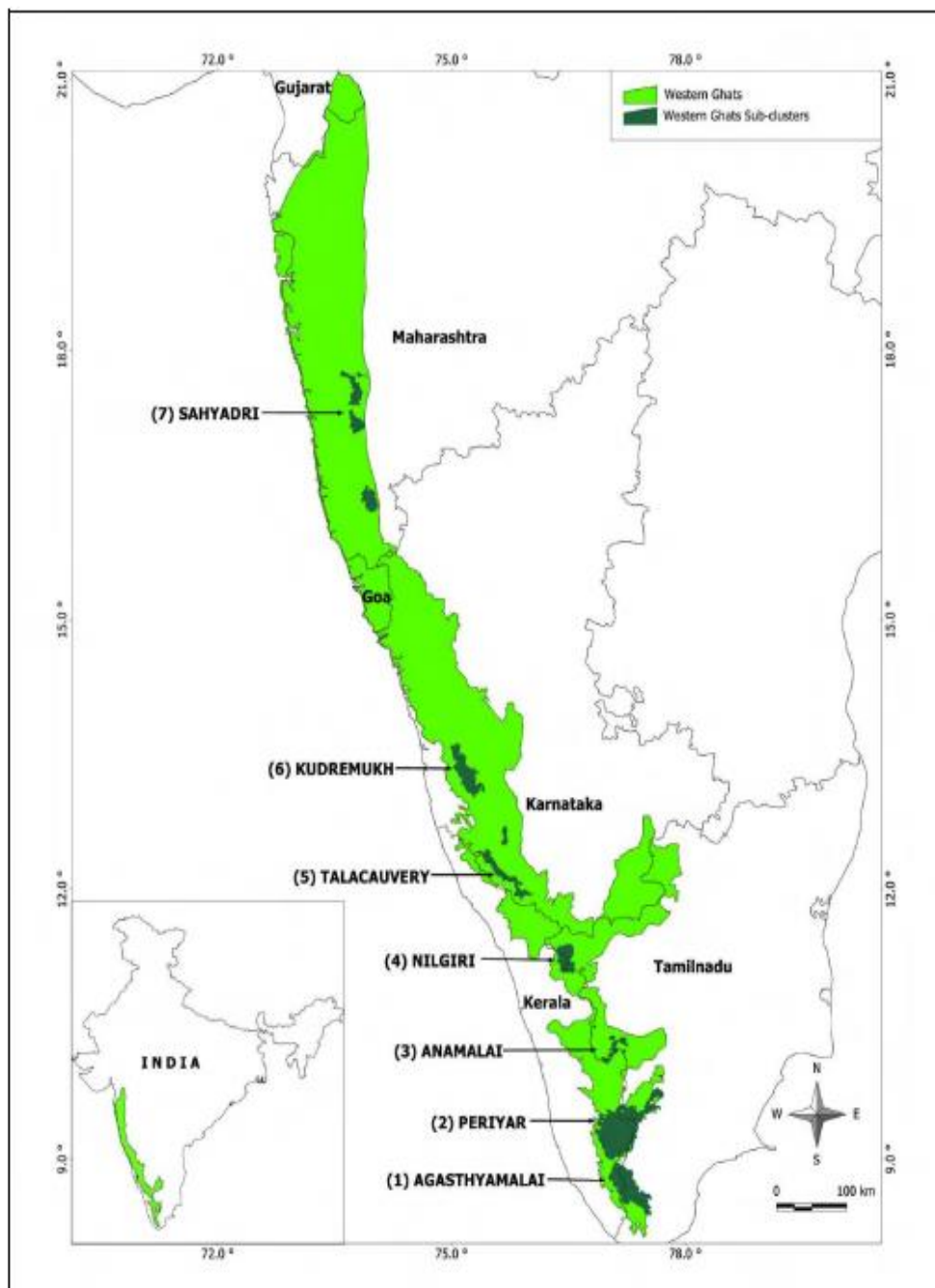
## Appendix 3: Supporting Facts

### Appendix 3A: Map of Western Ghats & Nilgiri Biosphere

**Western Ghats (mountain chain)** and its sub clusters are declared as **World Heritage Site** by UNESCO for its immense biodiversity. **Nilgiri sub cluster** is part of Western Ghats and **Attapadi** is part of Nilgiri.

**Western Ghats** is recognized as one of the **world's eight 'hottest hotspots' of biological diversity**

Figure 1. Map of the Western Ghats, showing the seven Sub-clusters included in the serial nomination





## Appendix 3B:

### News Article: Tribal people travel to meet the captured elephant (Pg. 1 of 2)



(Tribes believe in coexistence with wildlife and have high tolerance towards wild animals.)

News

## Adivasis journey to meet 'God'

Published: Oct 30, 2017, 11:50 AM IST

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A wild elephant took as captive from Attapadi at Kodanadu Abhayaranyam Photo:Mathrubhumi

Agali: "Bhagawane Paakkaku Pokanam" (We want to meet our God), said a group of Adivasis who reached before Mannarkkad Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) VP Jayapraksh. Though he was surprised to hear their request, he understood it later. The DFO promised them that he would arrange a meeting with their Bhagawan as soon as possible.

The Adivasis wished to meet the wild elephant which was captured with the help of Kumki elephants (trained elephants) from Attapadi on May 30. They approached DFO to meet this elephant as they keep an emotional attachment with animals.

They consider elephants as equal to God. So they address them as 'Bhagawan' or 'Swami'.

## Tribal people travel to meet the captured elephant (Pg. 2 of 2)

9/19/2018

Adivasis journey to meet 'God' | Adivasis | Wild elephant | Forest department | environmental issue/nature

If elephant destroys their crops, they consider it as a heavenly act. They believe that if elephant eats their crops, the harvest in their land would be double the next year.

The elephant that was taken as captive was their God. The forest officials recollected how many Adivasis cried out when the officials captured the elephant. Realizing their relation with the captive elephant, the DFO gave an opportunity to the Adivasis to meet their 'God'. At present, the elephant is at Kodanadu Abhayaranyam, a nature appreciation centre set up by State Forest Department at Kodanad in Ernakulam.

Mannarkkad DFO contacted Kodanad Assistant Forest Conservative to arrange a meeting of Adivasis with the elephant. The Adivasis will go to Kodanadu on November 7. A team of officials led by Mannarkkad division Forest Protection Committee Coordinator P Mohanakrishnan will accompany the tribal people. Forest Department will sponsor their trip to Kodanadu.

A different name is also given for their trip. It is 'Bhagavane Pakkaku Poka Pokku' (A journey to meet God)



*In many Human-Elephant conflict situations in India, wild elephant capture, brutal taming and lifelong captivity are followed as a norm. Elsa Foundation has been opposing this practice. Such taming and lifelong captivity is not evidenced in Africa. This seems to be one of the worst practices in India, which is blindly followed without thinking about any alternate strategies. This practice does not add any value to the conservation of species (or) the individual animal and causes huge damage to biodiversity. This investigation explores various factors ignored during the capture of a wild elephant from Agali in Kerala, India. It connects the dots, gives a holistic view and reveals shocking truths about the real reasons for Human-Elephant conflict in this forest region. It talks about how an elephant was victimized by human-created problems, lack of preventive measures & various disruptive acts damaging the biodiversity. It also suggests Hanging Solar Fences as a solution to solve HEC.*

