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Govt forgets Gundia is part of elephant reserve

Subhash Chandra N S, Bangalore, Sep 19, DHNS:

The controversial Gundia hydel project may be drawing criticism over obtaining environmental clearances, but what the State Government has conveniently hid is the fact that the Gundia region was declared as a part of the Mysore Elephant Reserve way back in 2002.

A notification dated November 11, 2002 (GO: FEE 231 FWL 2000) has declared it as an elephant reserve with approval from Government of India on March 26, 2002, (7-2/00 (PE)).

Accordingly, the ecologically-sensitive region with several endemic species of flora and fauna has been recommended to be protected under Gajah-2010 - the elephant task force report, which has recommended elephant be declared as a heritage animal. The Mysore Elephant Reserve, which spreads across 6724.87 sq km covers seven districts of Bangalore Urban, Bangalore Rural, Chamarajnagar, Mandya, Mysore, Kodagu and Hassan, covering forest stretches of Bandipur, Nagarhole, Brahmagiri and Pushpagiri.

"The Bisele Reserve Forest, is a part Mysore Elephant Reserve, and is also a catchment area of Gundia," said Dr T V Ramachandra, Senior Scientist Energy and Wetland research Group, Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES), Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

Confirming this, another notification mentions that Arani Village survey no 1 measuring 2548.17 hectares and Baazimane survey no 1 measuring 476.42 hectares and survey no 2 measuring 110.93 hectares totally measuring 3,135.52 hectares had been the part of elephant reserve as per the notification. Both the villages form a part of Bisele range.

However, a senior forest official declared his ignorance of the existence of this notification and denied that Gundia was part of an elephant reserve. According to a report prepared by the IISc, the place is a prominent elephant migratory path which connects Mudumalai National Park, Nagarhole, Bandipur, Brahmagiri, Mutthodi, Anechaur, Thithimathi, Dubare, Somwarpet, Brahmagiri, Bisele range forest, Kaginhare, Charmadi, Kempohle and Mudigere.

Tiger sightings have also been reported from the place and two incidents of cattle lifting have been recorded from Mekkirmane in Shettur hobli and Yedakumari both in Yelsur range. Pug marks measuring 16 cubic centimetres (cc) and 15 cc have been documented by Yelsur range forest officer Satish. H N Kumara, well-known primatologist during his study (2002- 2005) has found that the place is a crucial lion-tailed macaque region.

Several arboreals like Travancore flying squirrel (petinomys fuscocapillus), which was believed to be non-existent in Karnataka has been reported in 2005. This rare endangered species believed to be extinct was rediscovered in Kerala in 1989 after a gap of 70 years.

Nilgiri Marten (Martes gwatkinsii), the largest Indian mustelids, an endemic species to Western ghats is frequently sighted here along with malbar slender loris.

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By: Pramod Venkatesh Murthy
On: 20 Sep 2010 08:28 pm

This is such a shame!! Our Gov is thinking that it can do anything by closing its eyes. But there are a million eyes which keeps a watch on every activity the gov has done is doing and planning to do. And i dont understand why the district collector is not aware of the elephant corridor. and also the local forest dept. Gods grace that this one came to light. We all should see that they dont change the order passed (Like they did for Bghatta NSP). There are so so many alternate and efficient sources of energy why cant they use them. let them set up a power generation station - employ all the prisoners and physically fit beggars and also the refugees(from tibet) and ask them to cycle to generate power. a lot of things can be done. even the waste from the toilets can be used to generate power. why are we not trying to use it!!remember the MOTHER NATURE gave us a beautiful mind to think in a sustainable way and she though of tranfering a part of her power to humans in an impression that the one with a beautiful mind will take care of the rest of her children. But we are taking a different path of survival of te fittest!!!AT ANY COST WE HAVE TO STOP THIS HARM TO OUR MOTHER NATURE..EVEN IF IT ASKS FOR AGGRESSION

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