



Tamil Nadu

In the can: Elephant Shankar captured after two months

The two-month operation by Forest department to capture elephant Shankar bore fruit on Friday with officials capturing the 20-year-old wild tusker near Gudalur in the Nilgiris.



20-year-old jumbo 'Shankar' getting lifted onto a truck following a successful capture by the forest department near Gudalur in the Nilgiris; four Kumkis - Kalim, Sujai, Vijai and Srinivas - were used

Express News Service

Updated on: 13 Feb 2021, 8:41 am · 1 min read



by K Asokan, Forest Veterinary Officer of Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve, veterinarians G Vijayaragavan and K Rajeshkumar shot the tranquilizer dart at the wild elephant, which killed three persons last year, at Tenth Line at Cherampadi.

Operation started at 2.40 pm after officials chased away an elephant herd which was moving with Shankar.

“An attempt to tranquilize the elephant was made on Wednesday on Wednesday, but the tusker slipped away. This time we darted it with two strong doses of sedatives from a paran (temporary structure in a tree) after chasing other wild elephants,” said K Asokan, Forest Veterinary Officer.

“The elephant was in a good health. Until the elephant is shifted to the Kraal (Elephant Closure) at Theppakadu Elephant Camp in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR), mild dose of sedative would be used,” he further added. C Dinesh, Assistant Conservator of Forest (Coimbatore Division) told TNIE, “As the place where the elephant was darted is a forest cover, forest department is working to create a temporary path to take a truck closer to Shankar.”

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elephant

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Tamil Nadu

Wild elephant menace at O-Valley in Tamil Nadu: Panel to be set up, says DFO

The DFO also requested the forest department to create food sources for the elephants inside the forest.

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Express News Service

Updated on: 26 Jul 2024, 11:00 am · 2 min read



NILGIRIS: A committee of political leaders and local representatives will be formed to mitigate the human-wild elephant conflict at O-Valley near

Gudalur. This was announced by Gudalur Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) N Venkatesh Prabhu in a reply to an O-Valley-based petitioner.

The DFO has sent a reply to the petitioner, R Ranjit of O-Valley Makkal Iyakkam, who sent a letter to the Chief Minister's Special Cell seeking the forest department to form a committee of public representatives and local people. He also requested the forest department to create food sources for the elephants inside the forest.

The CM's Cell has forwarded the petition to the Gudalur DFO to respond to queries of Ranjit.

"Based on the petition, a committee of political leaders, local representatives, social activists, and representatives from various government departments will be formed. Steps will be taken based on the recommendation from the committee related to the prevailing man-animal conflict situation in the surroundings of O-Valley," said the DFO.

Responding to the creation of food sources for the wild elephants inside the forest, the DFO in a reply said that they are taking steps to plant fodder plants such as bamboo, jamun fruit, and jackfruit inside the forest.

"We are working round the clock to prevent human-elephant conflict even though the elephant movement is increasing due to the rapid increase in population, urbanisation, encroachment, and drastic changes in nature.

Elephant Proof Trenches (EPT) have been set up to prevent the intrusion of wild elephants, and a proposal has been sent to the state government seeking funds as part of extending the EPT for a wider area," said the DFO. The petitioner, Ranjit, in his plea to the CM's Special Cell, demanded the exclusion of O-Valley from the draft elephant corridor list prepared by the Tamil Nadu Forest Department elephant corridor list.

"Due to the rise in the population of tigers, wild elephant movement has increased in residential areas. The Tamil Nadu Forest Department should stop saying the elephant corridor is a solution and must immediately cancel the announcement in this regard," Ranjit said.

Replying to him, DFO cited the June 26 statement of forest minister, M Mathiventhan, in the state assembly that the Tamil Nadu forest department had not taken any step after releasing the draft elephant corridor list.



"The minister also stated that they will get opinions from people, biologists, technical experts, etc and discuss further steps related to the elephant corridor," said the DFO.

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O-Valley

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Rail services to Rameswaram via New Pamban bridge likely to resume by Oct 1

Subsequently, services on the old bridge were suspended and later halted completely in December 2022.

A train passing through the Pamban railway bridge at Rameswaram (File photo | Express)

Express News Service

Updated on: 26 Jul 2024, 10:57 am · 2 min read



RAMANATHAPURAM: As the construction of the New Pamban railway sea bridge is nearing culmination, official sources said the railway services to Rameswaram via the bridge are likely to resume by October 1 this year, even as activities including track checkup and electricity line works are yet to be carried out.

The work for the construction of a New Pamban rail bridge near the existing one was initiated by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) in 2019, considering the dilapidated condition of the century-old Pamban railway sea bridge. Subsequently, services on the old bridge were suspended and later halted completely in December 2022.

It may be noted that after the monitoring equipment, fixed by a team of experts from IIT Madras, found excessive vibrations in the bridge during train movement in 2022, the rail services to Rameswaram were suspended. Meanwhile, the construction activities of the new railway sea bridge are being carried out in a phased manner.

On July 11, Anil Kumar Khandelwal, Member Infrastructure, Railway Board, stated that over 90% works were completed, centre lift span works were under way and will be completed within two months. Official sources from the railways department said the New Pamban bridge is likely to be commissioned by the last week of September 2024.

As a result, all the rail services between Mandabam to Rameswaram through the New Pamban railway sea bridge are expected to resume by October 1, 2024. Railway officials have been instructed to make necessary arrangements, including the opening of passenger reservation up to Rameswaram railway station (RMM), readiness of pits, signalling and communication arrangements, fitness of track works, ahead of September 30, sources added.

Meanwhile, a senior official from the railway added that the pending works will be completed within the deadline, if there are no unforeseen delays.

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6K MT summer crop paddy procured in Madurai so far, farmers seek additional DPCs

In Madurai, summer paddy crops are cultivated over 1,000 hectares with farmers having decent water availability involved in cultivation activities.

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Express News Service

Updated on: 26 Jul 2024, 10:57 am · 2 min read



MADURAI: As the procurement of summer cultivation season paddy is coming to a close, farmers have requested authorities concerned to open additional Direct Purchase Centres (DPC) for selling the crop in Madurai. While the procurement for this Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) year is 40% lesser than the previous year, official sources from the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC) stated that proposals for additional DPCs in six villages are awaiting approval.

In Madurai, summer paddy crops are cultivated over 1,000 hectares with farmers having decent water availability involved in cultivation activities. In most areas, the final stretch of harvest work for the summer season crop is under way in full swing. Amid this juncture, some farmers who took part



at a grievance meeting recently urged the district administration to open additional DPCs for selling their harvest, citing that the present ones are located far away from their villages.

According to agriculture department officials, as many as six rural farmers from across the district, with approximately 90-100 hectares of harvest ready paddy crop, submitted requests for additional DPCs, and the proposal has been sent to authorities concerned for approval. Further, considering the fact that only farmers are allowed to sell their produce at DPCs, action is also being taken to prevent traders from selling paddy at the centres, they said.

Speaking to TNIE, a senior TNCSC official said, "For the summer season, the department has so far opened 18 DPCs in Madurai, which are currently receiving paddy from across the district. Additional DPC proposals have been sent for approval, and necessary action will be taken later this week. As of now, about 6,100 metric tonnes (MT) of paddy has been procured through DPCs in the district this season."

It may be noted that during the Kharif marketing season (which begins in September every year) this year, a total of 43,000 MT paddy was procured during the Samba cultivation season, as against the overall procurement (Samba and Summer) of 80,000 MT procured last year. Sources added that as several farmers opted to sell their paddy in open markets due to high demand, paddy price has been surging in these markets.

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Karur temple's new rope car gets stuck, eight stranded mid-air for an hour

The facility to the temple atop a hillock of Ayyarmalai was inaugurated by the chief minister only on Wednesday.



Following the rectification of the fault, Rathinagireeswarar temple's rope car was operated without carrying devotees, a temple official said (Photo | Express)

Express News Service

Updated on: 26 Jul 2024, 10:53 am · 1 min read



KARUR: A total of eight devotees visiting the Rathinagireeswarar temple at Kulithalai in the district were on Thursday stranded in mid-air for about an hour after the rope car in which they were travelling malfunctioned in the strong winds, officials said.

The facility to the temple atop a hillock of Ayyarmalai was inaugurated by the chief minister only on Wednesday. This incident occurred around 2.15 pm on Thursday.

As the rope car carrying the eight devotees started moving towards the temple from the foothills, strong winds made the wheels of the rope car to get stuck, HR& CE Joint Commissioner Kumara Durai told TNIE. "When the rope car had moved barely 100 feet, it got stuck.

A technical team present there attended to the issue and swiftly rectified it. They also rescued the devotees," he added. Mentioning a total of 271 devotees having used the facility till afternoon, the HR&CE official said,

"Following the rectification of the fault, the facility was operated without devotees. Everything is now functioning normally. We have consulted an



expert team to suggest swift measures to be taken in case of such malfunctioning in the future."

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Set up breast-feeding rooms: Hosur health committee

Madheswaran also said officials have been told to ensure drinking water availability in primary health centres.

Image used for representation

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Updated on: 26 Jul 2024, 10:44 am · 1 min read



KRISHNAGIRI: The chairperson of the Public Health Committee of Hosur City Municipal Corporation (HCMC) NS Madheswaran on Thursday directed private hospitals, theatres, and Primary Health Centres in the town to create breast-feeding rooms on their premises.



Addressing media persons, Madheswaran said, "The breast-feeding room at Hosur bus stand is in a bad condition. The corporation should take steps to improve it. Also, breast-feeding rooms should be created in all private and government health-care institutions within the HCMC limits. Also, officials should inspect toilet hygiene in theatres and private hospitals periodically."

Madheswaran also said officials have been told to ensure drinking water availability in primary health centres.

Earlier, the committee reviewed the performance of five Urban Primary Health Centres and fumigation activities. During the meeting, Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) staff asked for an echo-screening facility at Hosur so that children need not travel to Government Krishnagiri Medical College Hospital.

City Health Officer V Prabhakaran, Public Health Committee members, and health department staff attended.

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breast-feeding rooms

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