

Saving a mercilessly tortured wild elephant



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Shocking example of human cruelty, meted out to a eight years wild elephant at Surjyanagar,(Bethlehem Bagan) near Koramore under Harisinga Revenue circle (25 KM from Udalguri) has drawn animal lovers' sharp criticism. The incident has revealed the seriousness of the on going man elephant conflict in Udalguri district. According to one eye witness of the incident, Nanda Ram Baro, owner of a mini private tea garden of No.1 Amjuli, an eight years old wild elephant of a roaming herd of 70 to 80 elephant accidentally consumed (?) three bags of urea at Leabiaral mini tea garden on the night of August 8 after damaging 12 nos of houses of the locality. According to him the elephant had mistaken the urea for common salt, causing it unconscious. Seeing the wild elephant in a helpless state the very next morning a large group of irate people had gathered round the animal on August 9 and started torturing the animal. Burnt tires were thrown at it; spears were put inside its ears and its tail was half cut. A few honest man of the locality, namely- BR Bhobra,(FR-1); Gaonburah of No.2 Ghagra village R.Thappa; ABSU president (Harisinga) Binanda Basumatari etc some how managed to save the life of the animal till the arrival of police on August 10. But it was severely wounded. According to them the irate people wanted to kill and eat the elephant in retaliation. On hearing the incident, DN Hazarika ,Circle Officer, Harisinga Revenue Circle (Tangla) had visited the place at 7 am on August 10 and informed the matter to DC and DFO of Udalguri. Thanks to timely action of SS Meenakhi Sundaram IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Udalguri, under whose direction a team of police and CRPF personal (F 9th BN) headed by Chakra Choudhuri, OC, Harisinga police out post ,arrived at the scene. The security force had a tough time to control the irate people who had gathered round the elephant. In the meantime at the direction of Bankim Sarma, DFO Dhansri division, Range Officer Haladhar Kalita and other forest personals along with Dr.KC Chamua,VAS,Tangla arrived at the site at 3 pm on August 10 for the treatment of the elephant.

When this correspondent arrived at the site at 2-30 pm, the elephant was seen standing under CRPF protection with grievous injury on its ear and tail, still surrounded by irate people. First aid was provided to it at 5 pm. But all efforts of hired forest “Kunki” elephant Bahadur went in vain to shift it towards safe place, as the elephant was unable to move. Although so much cruelty had been meted out to a helpless wild elephant; the sight of emotional village women offering prayer at the site, for the speedy recovery of the wild elephant was enough to justify humanity.

Jayanta Kumar Das

Environmental journalist.

BY JAYANTA KUMAR DAS

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