



Elephant Casualties in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve

Source: TH

Recently, **four elephants** were found dead and five in poor health in **Madhya Pradesh's Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR)**.

- India has the **largest number of wild Asian Elephants**, estimated at 29,964 according to the **2017 census by Project Elephant**.
 - Karnataka** has the highest number of elephants, followed by **Assam and Kerala**.
- Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve:**
 - It is located in the **Umariya district of Madhya Pradesh** and is spread over the **Vindhya hills**.
 - It holds significant historical importance, evidenced by the **presence of the renowned Bandhavgarh Fort**, along with numerous caves, rock paintings, and carvings throughout the protected area.
 - In 1968, it was **designated as a national park** and in **1993 was declared a tiger reserve**.
 - It is known for the **Royal Bengal Tigers**.
 - Other important prey species consist of **chital, sambhar, barking deer, nilgai, chinkara, wild pig, chowsingha, langur** and **rhesus macaque**.
 - Dependent upon them are the major predators like **tiger, leopard, wild dog, wolf and jackal**.

ELEPHANT

Drishti IAS

4 Main Species of Elephant

Species	Found in	IUCN Red List Status	Habitat
Indian	Asia	EN (CITES - Appendix I, WPA - Schedule I)	Subtropical broadleaf forest, tropical broadleaf moist forest, dry forest, grassland
Sumatran	Asia	CR	Broadleaf moist tropical forests
Savanna (Bush)	Africa	EN	All sub-Saharan Africa except for Central Africa's dense tropical forest
Forest	Africa	CR	Dense Tropical Forests

Indian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*)

Largest Land Mammal on Asian Continent
National Heritage Animal of India

- Threats:**
 - Habitat Fragmentation
 - Poaching for Ivory
 - Human-Elephant Conflict
 - Mistreatment in Captivity
- Conservation Efforts:**
 - Gaj Sookhna App (2022)
 - Gaj Yatra (2017)
 - Hathi Mere Sathi campaign (2011)
 - National Elephant Corridor project (2005)
 - Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme (2003)
 - Project Elephant (1992)

Top 5 Indian States by Maximum Elephant Population:
(As per elephant census 2017)

- Karnataka > Assam > Kerala > Tamil Nadu > Odisha

Social Structure:

- Female elephants are more social than males; form herd (generally 5-7)
- Led by the oldest female, the 'matriarch'
- Males usually live alone

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