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Bandipur Tiger Reserve

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Why is in news? PM compliments staff at Bandipur Tiger Reserve for saving electrocuted elephant

Bandipur National Park is a national park covering 868.63 km² in Chamarajnagar district in the Indian state of Karnataka.

It was established as a tiger reserve under Project Tiger in 1973. It is **part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve** since 1986.

The **Maharaja of the Kingdom of Mysore** created a sanctuary of 90 km² in 1931 and named it the **Venugopala Wildlife Park**.

Biogeographically, **Bandipur Tiger Reserve lies in one of the richest biodiversity areas** of our country surrounded by Mudumalai Tiger Reserve in the South, Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary in the South West & on the North West Side the Kabini Reservoir separates the Bandipur and Nagarahole Tiger Reserve.

The **Northern side** of the Tiger Reserve is **surrounded by human dominated landscape** with villages and agricultural lands.

The Bandipur, Nagarahole, Wayanad, Mudumalai and Sathyamangalam Tiger Landscape is spread across the states of Karnataka (Bandipur-Nagarahole), Tamil Nadu (Mudumalai-Sathyamangalam) and Kerala (Wayanad).

Is a **fine example of managing inter-state Tiger Reserves** for the long term Conservation of Tiger Source Population.

The Bandipur Tiger Reserve forms a very important component of 5520.00 Sq. Km. landscape, the **first Biosphere Reserve in the country i.e. Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (Notified on 1986)**, Government of India under the Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme of the IUCN).

This Landscape of Bandipur, Nagarahole, Mudumalai & Wayanad complex is **home to single largest Asian Elephant population in the world** and is part of the Mysore Elephant Reserve (MER).

The Reserve is endowed with rich floral and faunal diversity and is recognized as one of the Mega Biodiversity Areas in the country.

The **Tiger and the Elephants are the flagship and umbrella species** for the conservation of all the Biota that this ecosystem represents. The viable population of these two species is indicative of a healthy Ecosystem.

The State Government under Section 38V of the **Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2006**, notified an area of 584.06 Sq.Km. to be the **Buffer Zone** of the Bandipur Tiger Reserve.

The Central Government under the provisions of the **Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986** have notified the **Eco-Sensitive Zone** of the Bandipur Tiger Reserve covering a geographical area of 597.45 Sq.Km. which includes 123 villages.

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The park has a variety of biomes including **dry deciduous forests, moist deciduous forests and shrublands**. The wide range of habitats help support a diverse range of organisms.

The park is flanked by the **Kabini river** in the north and the **Moyar** in the south. The **Nugu river** runs through the park.

Bandipur has **typical tropical climate with distinct wet and dry seasons**. The dry and hot period usually begins in early March and can last till the arrival of the monsoon rains in June.

The **National Highways NH-181 and NH-766** pass through Bandipur national park. This road has been a **major concern as speeding vehicles** have killed many wild animals in spite of frequent warnings to travellers from the forest department officials and restriction on movement of vehicles in some stretches between 6 P.M to 6 A.M. This has **raised fears of extinction of habitat of wild animals** exclusively found in this national park.

On October 9, 2018 the National Park lost one of its prized possession, a tusker named 'Rowdy Ranga' was hit by a bus in the night after which the government of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka agreed to **ban night traffic in the forest**. However, Kerala condemns the 'Night Ban' and has asked for the ban to be lifted to save a reroute that increases the distance by 45 km.